Interview with Richard Jackson L.

Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

RICHARD L. JACKSON

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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Q: Today is the 17th of August, 1998. This is an interview with Richard L. Jackson. This is done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Dick, let's start at the beginning. When and where were you born,and could you tell me something about your family?

JACKSON: I was born in New York City in December, '39. I grew up in New York basically until the age of 10 or 11. My parents separated and divorced after World War II, so I split my time between them.

Q: Still in New York, more or less—New York City?

JACKSON: Well, my mother was in New York; my father was in Princeton, New Jersey and in Washington. He had been a lawyer, then an investment banker, and was involved with the OSS in the War. Coming out of it, he was on something called the Triple Jackson Committee involved in the legal underpinnings of the CIA. He subsequently became the Deputy Director of the CIA and, briefly under Eisenhower, the National Security Advisor.

Q: His first name was?

JACKSON: William. William Harding.

Q: Let's do the education first. Where did you go to school? In New York City?

JACKSON: I went to grade school in New York City. I went away to small boarding school —St. Mark's School—in Massachusetts.

Q: You were at St. Mark's when to when?

JACKSON: I was there six years, from '52 to '58.

Q: Can you tell us a little about the school?

JACKSON: It was very small, very conservative. I was sent there following in my father's footsteps. I enjoyed it at the time, but it was not a school particularly oriented towards foreign affairs and international things. I think, in fact, subsequent experience of a foreign service career was a process of unlearning the stereotypes and prejudices you pick up in a small, all-male boarding school. It was not a school that was open, at the time I was there, to much deviation from whatever the norms were. Not open particularly to minorities; there were at the time no women and no African-Americans.

Q: What about reading and all? What did you like to read when yowere in prep school?

JACKSON: I read quite widely. Most things I could get my hands on. It was a good school academically. It obliged me to take many years of Latin. They also offered Greek, which I have since studied, but did not then. Sports were a big aspect of the school. I wasn't particularly the football type or size, so I was on the wrestling team for much of my time there; I carried that over to college.

Q: At the time you were there, from'52 to '58, the Cold War was goinon. Did that intrude at all?

JACKSON: It did not really, Stu. I have to think in retrospect, we were woefully insular and sheltered. There was one course in which you were required to read Time Magazine every week. But I was more oriented, I guess, toward English literature and history and not too aware of current events

Q: When you graduated in '58, where did you go?

JACKSON: I graduated and went to Princeton University, again without a lot of prior thought. That had been a family pattern. In those days, it was different than now; I applied only to Princeton, went there and had a wonderful four years—an expanding four years.

Q: What was your major?

JACKSON: My major was American Literature, with, I guess, a combination in something then called the Special Program in American Civilization.

Q: Again, how about the international world? Did that come up at all?

JACKSON: No, it really did not, and that's probably a failing on my part. There were many people there much more aware of things internationally than I. Frank Wisner, for example, was in the class ahead of me and was deeply involved in Arabic and Middle Eastern studies. But I was not. Somebody asked me at that time who U. Thant was, and I couldn't answer the question, which tells you something. My focus continued to be literature; I kept up the wrestling a couple of years in Princeton; and had very good friends there that I have carried forward to this day. I think Scott Fitzgerald described Princeton as “seven friends and the trees and buildings,” and that's not a bad description. I came out of it, like many, with near certainty that I would write the “Great American novel.”

Q: Prior to World War II, Princeton was one of the main feeding grounds for the Foreign Service. In fact, more than Yale and Harvard. Princeton, it seemed, supplied an awful lot of Foreign Service recruits. Did the Foreign Service intrude on your scene at all?

JACKSON: No, it really didn't. I think that had somewhat tapered off in my time. There was one other classmate, Tom Rohlen, who came in the Foreign Service, but didn't stay very long. I think, on that campus, CIA was far more active. The Dean of Students, I believe, was an out-and-out recruiter for the CIA. Many more seemed to gravitate to the Agency at that time.

Q: Your father, being a high-ranking official of the CIA at one point, and I suppose at this time, a real Washingtonian, did that bring you into the Washington scene?

JACKSON: Not really, Stu. He was never really a Washingtonian. He was always more a New Yorker. He was a New York lawyer and investment banker who did his time, somewhat uncomfortably, in Washington. While I did come down here sometimes, my time with him was more likely to be vacations elsewhere.

Q: You graduated in '62. By the way, I want to capture this period of time. Kennedy was elected and ran in 1960 and began as President in 1961. For many of the people who came into the Foreign Service, his call on Americans to serve their country struck a very responsive note. What about at Princeton, both with you and your colleagues? How did this hit?

JACKSON: It may have been the segment I was in, but it didn't ring that loudly. After Princeton, I spent a year in France at the Sorbonne. I was just married, also, at that time. I wasn't in those years and I have to say that I wasn't, at that point, answering the call.

Q: You went to France for a year at the Sorbonne. How did this fiinto your life plan?

JACKSON: Well, I had taken French in school and college. Education then was less career-oriented than today and, to the extent I thought about it, I was drawn to the idea of a law career or the Foreign Service. My older brother, Bill, was then starting in the Foreign Service. I thought that a year of study in France would be an opportunity to sort through it. I was, at that stage, in the process of applying to the Foreign Service.

Q: Did France—'62 to '63 I guess—what was your impression oFrance, French student life, and all of that?

JACKSON: The experience of being in Paris with friends and different people that we came to know was very interesting and expanding. France itself was an exciting place to be. The Sorbonne, I found, frankly, somewhat disappointing. I was in a section called the Ecole Superieure pour la Preparation et le Perfectionnement des Professeurs de Fran#ais # l'Etranger, a long title intended for people polishing their French in order to teach it, which I never did. But I found, compared to my undergraduate years, that the French educational system was rigid, overcrowded, the professors arrogant, and the distance between student and professor enormous. There was very little of the intellectual challenge that happily characterized Princeton for me.

Q: Was there any political ferment going on at that time? It wareally in late '68 or so that the uprising occurred.

JACKSON: No, I was there from 1962-1963, so there was no outright ferment. There was a lot, however, of student unrest, dissatisfaction with university conditions and overcrowding. That was quite apparent, but it didn't bubble over, as it later did.

Q: You were just married.

JACKSON: Just married.

Q: Was your wife American?

JACKSON: Yes, she was, still is, American.

Q: Did you have a chance to travel around Europe at all?

JACKSON: A little bit. Mostly France, though.

Q: Had you taken the Foreign Service Exam?

JACKSON: I have to say I took the Foreign Service Exam three times. I took the written with the benefit of the five points you then got for a foreign language—French—and passed it, and then woefully stumbled on the oral. I think my father at that point was out of touch and advised me to wear his hand-made, elevator shoes, which didn't fit me. (Laughter) I practically tripped over the table entering the room and certainly didn't make a very good impression.

Q: Do you recall any of the questions on that oral?

JACKSON: I recall that they were clearly then building a case, I think, and they were talking about the hyper-inflation in Brazil and asked me, if I were the Finance Minister, what would be the first eight or ten steps I would take. And I got to about the second or third step, and they began to challenge whether I would really do this or that with interest rates. Then they said that they had noticed a gap of economics in my college transcripts and suggested that, if I were to come back, I remedy that. So I went from there for one year and got a Masters Degree at the Fletcher School outside Boston. In that process, I took the written exam again without benefit of the language bonus, which they had dropped, failed it, and then the third time passed it.

Q: Let's talk a little bit about Fletcher. Fletcher has also been one of the areas where people interested in the Foreign Service go. How did you find Fletcher at this point?

JACKSON: I found Fletcher an ideal, one-year experience for me, in the sense my earlier education had been almost entirely focused on literature, the arts, history, French and philosophy. So it very well remedied gaps in international affairs and economics that I had not previously focused on. I didn't live at the campus, in fact I had about a 50-minute commute, so I don't feel I took maximum advantage of the total Fletcher experience, the so-called Fletcher family, that people speak so much about. I did make some friends who have stayed with me through the years. It was a very agreeable year. I think, with the modest level of knowledge I started out with, that I probably didn't push the envelope at Fletcher in terms of taking some of the renowned, advanced courses. But it was a good year and a good experience, nor do I have any regrets about not staying on for a Ph.D. Ph.D's I subsequently supervised in the Service often seemed to me to over-conceptualize and to require remedial work with regard to writing style.

Q: Was Fletcher sort of pushing anything, was it pointed towards more power to the UN, a greater European Community, or what have you during this mid-60 period?

JACKSON: That was not apparent to me. Among the courses that I think influenced me most, I was fortunate to have John Spencer on Africa. He had been Haile Selassie's legal advisor over a long period of years. He certainly kindled an interest in the Horn of Africa in me. I had Professor Ruhl Bartlett, the famous diplomatic historian, who was truly excellent. The quality of some of the faculty there was outstanding.

Q: Your second oral exam—how did that go?

JACKSON: It went well. I was accepted. I don't think I set any records, but it was a solid pass. Nevertheless, I recall the examiner's attitude was a sort of begrudging, “You're lucky to get in,” rather than a morale-building, “Welcome on board.” I passed the interim period after being accepted for five months in Washington as a volunteer worker at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, which was an interesting experience, probably a decent preparation for the Foreign Service.

Q: St. Elizabeth's being a place for mental patients.

JACKSON: That's right. I, in fact, worked there with patients from Haiti and from Italy—by then I spoke passable Italian and French—who had no other way of communicating. Rather sad. Some of them, to my untrained eye, didn't seem markedly disturbed, but just simply had never been able to communicate. So I think that was a useful experience.

Q: You came into the Foreign Service when?

JACKSON: I came in April of '65. Took the basic orientation course and asked for the Horn of Africa under the influence, probably, of Professor Spencer. That was granted. I think my classmates thought I was crazy, but I went quite happily to Mogadiscio.

Q: About the A-100 Course, which is the Orientation or Basic Officer Course, could you talk a little about its composition at that particular time in 1965? Maybe your impression of the Foreign Service and what they were teaching.

JACKSON: It was a basic orientation. There were two people in charge of it—Bob Barnett and Gary Soulen. It was a nuts-and-bolts introduction to Foreign Service work by a procession of speakers, much as it probably is today, without the newer refinements of gaming and roleplaying that we now have. There was perhaps a little bit too much emphasis on using the A-100 to pad out ceremonial events. I think we must have been trundled over and presented to the Under Secretary for Management—then, I believe, Idar Rimestad—on at least a half-dozen occasions. The class was quite diverse in the sense of varied educational and international background. There were a small number, but there were women in the class, maybe half a dozen.

Q: You served in Mogadishu from when to when?

JACKSON: I was there from 1965-66.

Q: What was the political/economic situation in Somalia?

JACKSON: Well, Somalia was then one of the great hopes in Africa; of course then there was tremendous optimism about Africa as a whole. There had been the great wave of African independence in 1960. There were people like Soapy Williams structuring Africa policy. The thinking was that with our resources and know-how, we could quickly pattern these countries after ourselves and that they would prosper in the democratic path. I think there was a vast underestimation of the problems involved in development, notwithstanding the theories, then current, about well-defined stages of economic growth. The AID bureaucracy and sheer numbers in the missions abroad, certainly in Somalia, was tremendous. Somalia was probably considered one of the most hopeful cases, although it's one of the poorest countries—and still is today—in Africa. Yet it was the only one that was considered a genuine nation, in the sense that it was one ethnic group, speaking one language, leaving aside that it overlaps areas of former French Somalia (Djibouti) and in the Ogaden area of Ethiopia, as well as vast areas of northern Kenya. Yet there was a feeling of tremendous optimism. I think people overestimated and romanticized the Somali democratic leaders. There was a charismatic, young prime minister, Abderrazak Hagi Hussein, who wore stylish white suits and was literally seen as a knight in white armor. There were, however, underlying problems of corruption and tribalism. Other issues were not well understood or, if known, were minimized and swept under the table, I think. It was an exciting place to be, in those years, which, after all, were only five years from Somali independence.

Q: I had served as an INR Officer for the Horn of Africa from 1960 to '61, I think. I didn't have that much, I mean Somalia was up for grabs and our whole policy revolved around, at that point anyway, maintaining Kagnew Station, which was in Eritrea, then part of Ethiopia. Somalia was considered almost an intruder if it screwed up our relations with Ethiopia. How did that play in Somalia when you were there some years later?

JACKSON: It's fair to say there was a very antagonistic relationship between U.S. Embassies in Somalia and Ethiopia. There was a political ambassador, Ed Korry, in Addis, who was tremendously aggressive in telling the Ethiopian story and stimulated lots of competition with Somalia. Somalia, of course, did not particularly count because of Kagnew Communications Station and the close U.S. relationship with Haile Selassie. Our eggs were in the Ethiopian basket. Yet it was tremendously interesting to be in Somalia as they were attempting to shape their future in those years. The Somali, often described as the Irish of Africa, are a very engaging, physically beautiful people— argumentative and frequently one may be exasperated with them, but they are, nevertheless, a very strong, handsome, and attractive people.

Q: Who was our Ambassador?

JACKSON: I had two while I was there. First, Tully Torbert, an excellent, old-line type of Ambassador, although we didn't have much of an overlap. For most of the time, it was Ray Thurston.

Q: How did he operate?

JACKSON: Ray was a very experienced diplomat. He had been burned somewhat as Ambassador to Haiti, I believe. He was the caricature of the unfortunate American Ambassador in one of the Graham Greene novels.

Q: “The Comedians” or something.

JACKSON: I think so. You couldn't utter Graham Greene's name in his presence. I liked Ray Thurston very much. I found him encouraging and interested in the young people in the embassy, as well as inclusive in terms of trips within Somalia. He was someone easy to stay up late with over a couple of drinks discussing where Somalia was going and clearly enjoying his time in what was undoubtedly a retirement post. I have to say, among all the other duties you get in your first post, I was the Post Language Officer. He

instructed me to identify the best Italian teacher available for him, which I did. The lessons evidently progressed, and he subsequently left his wife and she her husband, although that was a scandal well after my time in Somalia.

Q: Talking about Somalia as the hope of the future, all I can think of is a parched area with bananas. And that's about it. I mean, what were we basing our hopes on?

JACKSON: I think the hopes for the future were political. The rest of Africa was seen as driven by tribal and linguistic conflict. This was the one country that truly existed as an ethnic nation. The Somali were also tremendously articulate. There were the beginnings of a democratic dialogue. There were rallies and political parties. The parliament was a very active place in those years. But basically you're right, economically, there was very little. Camels and sheep and goats, bananas, as you said, between the two rivers, the Juba and the Uebi Shebelle. Uranium existed in the interior, but not in quantities that made it worthwhile to transport. There was no infrastructure whatsoever. The Italians had run it as an exploitive colony and left almost nothing, although there was still considerable Italian cultural influence in the south, particularly Mogadishu, at that time which contributed to the atmosphere of the place.

Q: What about the situation there? You say basically they were a unified nation. Later, we're talking about the late 80's and early 90's, the whole place erupted into—if they weren't tribal disputes—sub-tribal vendettas. Were any of those rifts apparent at that time?

JACKSON: Yes, of course. Somalis are intensely confrontational, litigious, and they have a very careful system of checks and balances among the various tribes and subfactions. There were continual feuds, which were regulated sometimes with bloodshed, sometimes with exchange of camels. But I have to say we and the other nations have distorted that balance over the years by introducing modern weaponry and thus building up tribal elements around Mogadishu, the tribe of long-term strongman President Siad Barre. In my time, he was the Defense Minister. In saying that we have shifted the balance

in Somalia, what I mean is that, prior to the Cold War era, the various competing tribal factions, analyzed by writers like John Drysdale and I.M. Lewis, were in approximate equilibrium in a very harsh survival environment with severely limited resources. With the Cold War, the Russians became strong in Somalia with military bases, particularly a major naval base at Berbera and enormous quantities of armaments. Then, with the fall of Haile Selassie, they switched sides and backed the Ethiopians, and Somalia became our client. We also put in weaponry, and all of that was very destabilizing. When I say Somalia was the only real nation on the continent, I think the rest of Africa conspired against them in its unwillingness, under the OAU Charter, to revise boundaries, because the Somali populations did overlap other countries and constituted a threat to the established order. They had an irredentist dispute with each of the other territories. The Somali flag is the five-pointed star, which represents the five areas considered to be Somali; only two of which—the former Italian Somaliland and former British Somaliland in the north—have ever been incorporated into Somalia.

Q: Did that intrude at all at the time you were there, thairredentist side of Somalia?

JACKSON: There was always low-level skirmishing in the Ogaden with the Ethiopians and in the Northern Frontier District, the NFD, in Kenya. There was an active Ogadeni Liberation Front. I think I was one of the first officers to speak Somali, and I recall meeting the legendary head of the Ogaden Liberation Front, Makhtal Dahir. He was a giant of a man with red henna hair, said to be able to eat a goat at one sitting.

Q: What was your impression of our AID Mission there?

JACKSON: They were very large. Very difficult for the small embassy economic staff, I think, to keep tabs on everything they were doing. On the other hand, they were wonderfully qualified professionals and very committed people, who were really trying to do their best in each of their sectors to bring this country along. I think the problem was not the people; the problem was with the Cold War confrontation with the Soviets that

kept flip-flopping. There was a continual stop and start on the major projects. So there was never the consistency of development that, if followed to term, might have led to real development over ten or 15 years. That particularly applied to the showpiece projects that we became engaged in, like the Chisimaio (Kisimayu) deep water port or like NTEC, the National Teacher Education Center. None of those were ever seen properly through to completion, and that was true of many other projects in that country. That was political and direct from Washington, in my view, rather than related to the quality of the people, many of whom were badly disillusioned by this course of events, or of the management within the Mission.

Q: Did you have much contact with our embassy in Addis Ababa?

JACKSON: Personally I had none. Relations were seriously strained at the upper levels and there was very little communication. But I have to say, relative to my A-100 classmates, who went to bigger and so-called better posts, I'm sure I had the best of it. The rotational experience in a small country like Somalia was fantastic. By virtue of learning to speak Somali, I think I met most people in that country from the Prime Minister on down. They were remarkably open. The embassy at that time was quite encouraging and not protocol conscious in that respect.

My first assignment was head of the one-man consular section. The consular section, since there were very few Americans there and very few Somalis traveling to the United States, was almost entirely involved in protection of British interests, which was a large responsibility. The British had been asked to leave as a result of misunderstandings arising from Kenyan independence in 1963, which gave Somali-inhabited areas to the Kenyans. We were their protecting power. I had at my disposal a large Land Rover which had been left for the Vice Consul in charge of British interests for travel through the country. One focus was the work for the British War Graves Commission. We had a retired British Brigadier, based in Nairobi, who would inspect my work which sometimes involved reburials and regrouping regiments together. At one stage, he instructed us to bury a field

piece that had become corroded and which he felt was an “insult to the Queen.” That was a fair amount of work. We also had two shipwrecks of British- protected persons during my time. One, was a large dhow from Oman, where almost everybody drowned. The Captain landed in the water with his small son and his daughter. He swam a little bit, and later told me, when I interviewed him, that he left his daughter because he couldn't make it with both. He swam further and then left his son as well. The choices were automatic and he was proud to have survived and reached the shore, which made an impression on me because I think we Westerners probably would have all gone down together.

The other was a more interesting shipwreck. It was a large group of 80 or 100 British-protected persons who had been blown off course and across the Indian Ocean from the Maldive Islands. We worked for many months reporting to London via Washington to get those people finally repatriated, but it proved to be an expensive care-and-feeding operation.

Q: Did you go up to former British Somalia, to Hargeisa? Did we hava post there? Was there a difference there?

JACKSON: I frequently went up to Hargeisa. We had a small post there, now long closed. Gordon Beyer was the Consul. It was—yes—very different. It was higher, dryer territory and inland, compared to Mogadishu. There was also a much different atmosphere, as a result of the English language and British influence. An interesting place in those years. Sadly decimated by tribal fighting later.

Q: At that point, was the central government in Mogadishu trying textend itself and brush aside the British influence?

JACKSON: There was a difference, and there were tribal rivalries, but the Prime Minister who followed Abderrazak Hagi Hussein was from the North. He was also a very charismatic politician, Mohammad Egal, so there was an effort to knit the two parts of the

country together, although the resources to do that were woefully absent. Some of the AID programs were intended to help in that respect.

Q: By the way, did you have children at this point?

JACKSON: We had one son. It was an ideal place to live, although there were recurrent bouts with fevers that could be somewhat frightening, as you would expect in that kind of place. The health facilities were very rudimentary. But it was a wonderful place, frankly, to live. The embassy had a half dozen very congenial couples of more or less similar age, and we had a lot of fun, and traveled frequently throughout the country. It was an unspoiled country in those years. You could take a lantern at night and simply pick up sufficient lobsters swimming to it to feed a picnic. I very much enjoyed those years. One always remembers the first post. It's perhaps the best.

Q: In 1966, it's time to leave this post. Where did you go?

JACKSON: By 1966, it was time to leave, although the Somali language was later instrumental in my coming back. I might talk a minute about that. It was an extremely interesting language to study, which I did on my own a couple of hours a day for the time I was there—a language of regular grammar, great vocabulary richness in the area of livestock and camels—as well as a total absence of forms of politeness like please or thank you, which reflects the directness of the people. In any case, I pushed and pushed FSI for an exam, which they had never before given in that language. I went down finally to Nairobi to be examined by one of the head FSI linguists, an authority on Shona but not a Somali speaker. He employed two Somalis he picked up in Kenya to administer the test—one from the far south and one from the far north—with totally different dialects. I had studied the language in the center of the country and was given invariably the benefit of the doubt by these two examiners. I spoke a very rudimentary Somali. At one point, the FSI linguist said, “The real test of speaking the language is the ability to convey humor. I want you to tell this following joke.” He summarized an American baseball joke which, had

I been able to translate it, which I could not, the two Somalis would not have made heads or tails of. So I told them a typical, hackneyed Somali joke and they roared with laughter, with the result that he gave me an absurdly high grade. (Laughter)

The point of the story is that, in my subsequent assignment to Libya, when Vice President Humphrey made his controversial trip to Ethiopia and Somalia, the computer identified me as the only one in the USG with the Somali language, and I was given 48 hours to get back to Somalia to be on tap for Hubert Humphrey. It was a very conflicted visit with alleged death threats against Hubert Humphrey and a tremendous security entourage and tension among the Secret Service people. I was there theoretically to interpret for the Vice President, who was a rapid fire speaker, as you remember. There was no way I could do that in Somali. Fortunately, there were Somalis who spoke English, so I was turned over to the CIA and charged with monitoring a hook-up into the police radio for threats against the Vice President. At one point, he was en route to the President's villa, at a place called Afgoy, which means “cut lip.” Pandemonium broke out on the radio, and the Secret Service were asking me, “Should we turn the Vice President around and bring him back?” I heard the word, donkey, and, knowing the road, made a guess that a donkey had gotten out in front, which proved to be the case, but it was a tense moment.

Q: This was when?

JACKSON: I would say it was early 1967.

Q: Why were there threats against Humphrey?

JACKSON: Because Somalis perceived that we were propping up Haile Selassie and using U.S. funds and arms to quash Somali resistance in the Ogaden.

Q: Before we leave Somalia, did the fact that we had this powerful Ambassador in Ethiopia, plus the fact that we had Kagnew Station, which seemed to be the focus of our

basic policy there, did this have any repercussions in your work—our embassy's work—in Mogadishu during the time you were there?

JACKSON: There was a constant exchange of salvos with Embassy Addis in the reporting. Somalia, so far as I could see, always lost in that because we didn't have the firepower and U.S. interests in the country were peripheral, unlike in Ethiopia. But that was long ago in an era when reporting was done in something called the “WEEKA,” a single airgram. I can remember the Political Counselor, Bill Sandals, would huddle with the DCM, Alex Johnpoll, every Friday afternoon on pouch day. The conference room was next to my office and arguments and epithets over the WEEKA were not lost on me. FinallBill Sandals would burst out and have to rewrite it. There were obviously some tensions in the embassy to which, happily as a Junior Officer, I was largely immune.

Q: (Laughter) Oh, yes. I knew Alex Johnpoll in Belgrade. Well, yowent to Libya. You were in Libya from 1966 to when?

JACKSON: I was in Libya from 1966-68. They had earlier tried to transfer me to Asmara, but for some reason that fell through. I was transferred quite late in '66—in November—a direct transfer to Tripoli, Libya.

Q: Libya in late '66. What was the situation then?

JACKSON: Libya was a big scene relative to Somalia, in terms of U.S. interests. We had a lot going on. We had Wheelus Air Base, which was a vast base with sophisticated jets training in and out of there from bases in Germany. Libya had gone from being the poorest country in the world, with a per capita income of about $48 at independence in the early 1950s to being a major oil producer. The great surge of Libyan oil discovery was from 1960-62, so that all of the major oil companies were in there. By the time I got there in '66, they had reached daily per barrel production of about three million barrels. This was staggering wealth for a country of then 1.4 million people many of them bedouins. They didn't know what to do with this money and were awash in it. Corruption was rampant.

They were under a very benign, but ascetic and elderly king who basically lived as a recluse with a succession of palaces in one of the four de facto capitals of that country (Tripoli, Benghazi, Baida, and Tobruk).

Q: What was your job?

JACKSON: I was assigned to the Political Section. We were a section of four. The Section Chief was Holsey Handyside. Rocky Suddarth was in it. John Billings was the Political/ Military officer, and I was the junior.

Q: Who was the Ambassador?

JACKSON: The Ambassador was a superb professional diplomat, from whoI learned a great amount—David Newsom.

Q: A very strong embassy.

JACKSON: The DCM was Jim Blake.

Q: Looking at it as basically a kingdom with a reclusive ruler with a sparse population spread over a large territory, what the hell does a political section of four do?

JACKSON: Well, it seemed as if we had enough to do, at least relative to the small or more informal setting I had come from. Perhaps, in retrospect, some of it was make work. Personally, I devoted a lot of time to biographic reporting, building a big data base on the Libyans. That was rather interesting work, in the sense that many of the Libyan officials were so venal and had so many things in their past, which with a little bit of scratching one could uncover. We had also a fair amount of work with Wheelus Air Base. There was always the question of which privileged Libyans would get access to the Base medical and dental facilities. The King, I believe, was one of the prime clients. It was said, that during World War II, he had gone to an Italian dentist who was so nervous he had stitched up and down his tongue with an electric drill and, as a result, the King required only wooden

instruments from an earlier era of dentistry, which ambitious Air Force dentists always balked at using.

Q: I believe it!

JACKSON: Ultimately, I think they got a high speed water drill ihis mouth.

Q: (Laughter) Well now, looking at it, you're looking at the political situation there, where at that particular time did you feel the political power lay?

JACKSON: Libya was a kind of vacuum. One heard a lot about pan-Maghreb aspirations, but political power? Libya was still in the process of finding itself as a nation. They weren't really a nation. People thought of themselves as Cyrenaicans or Tripolitanians, or Fezzanis. Libya, after all, was a country over which many of the major invasions of history have trodden—Greeks, Romans, Phoenicians, Turks, to name a few. Many of the major tank battles of World War II were fought on Libyan territory. The Italian colonial period was particularly exploitive and led to fierce resistance against the Italians among the tribes throughout the Jebel Akhdar Mountains of Cyrenaica. In general, Libyans were, it seemed to me, a very downtrodden group of people, suddenly rich beyond belief and with very little sense of self and with all of the arrogance and corruption that seemed to go with that. I can remember typically stopping to let pedestrians pass in the street and they would pass the car and, rather than thank you, they would thumb their nose at you. They'd gotten the better of a foreigner in a car. It was an interesting, but peculiar atmosphere. One was able to make Libyan contacts, but it took a lot of work. There was certainly not the pleasure in debate and discussion for its own sake that there was in Somalia. It was much more seen as an opportunity, I think, for a young Libyan businessman on the make to have access to liquor and maybe to meet single Western women at embassy diplomatic functions.

Q: You were there in 1967. How about what was known as the Six-Day War and the massive defeat of particularly the Egyptian Army at that point. How did that hit?

JACKSON: Before coming to that, I'd note that the sheer opulence and conspicuous consumption, even garish taste of some of the Libyans who tapped into sudden oil money, had to be seen to be believed. There was also venality, if not outright cruelty and prejudice. There was still a very small Jewish community in Libya at that time who were extremely badly treated. There was a man at Wheelus Base, in fact, who smuggled some members of the community out in a bass fiddle case from the orchestra which created a diplomatic incident when discovered..

But coming back to the Six-Day War, I had been with my wife on a brief leave in Egypt just before and in fact at the Red Sea at Hurghada, which was in an Egyptian strategic area. Flying into Hurghada, since we were the only foreigners on the plane, the Egyptian pilot asked us to come and sit with him in the cockpit. We saw all military areas, as well, and this was only a few days before the attack, showing that the Egyptians were totally without advance warning and unprepared. In any case, we were back in Libya at the time that war broke out.

As you know, all of the F-4s and other jets at Wheelus Air Base took off in formation at the outset of that conflict to return to Germany and ensure their security. They couldn't be protected there in Libya. That fed rumors in Libya that they had taken off to bomb Cairo, and so there was very extreme anti-American feeling. We evacuated dependents and some embassy personnel. There was a good deal of rioting at the time. I remember there were some quite valuable things, if memory serves, gold and papers that were in the embassy. I and the Budget and Fiscal Officer, Byron Walker, were asked to escort them by truck to Wheelus Air Base; leaving the embassy one morning at 3:30 or 4:00 a.m. We drove the truck along the Wheelus Highway, and there were giant trucks and cars burning along the road, many roadblocks and nervous Libyan soldiers with machine guns. It was a tense thing, but we got to Wheelus okay.

We were then in a period of several months with the evacuees out of the country, many of them, including my family, in a holding pattern in Italy. Gradually, through adept

diplomacy by David Newsom, the situation began to right itself. He, very wisely, opened up negotiations with the Libyans on the future of Wheelus to accommodate pressures that the King and the Libyan leaders were under. He drew it out and drew it out until the passions and tensions subsided. It was a masterful performance that ensured that the base continued to exist there until well into the Qadhafi era. I was fortunate to be the notetaker for those negotiations and learned a great deal watching Ambassador Newsom patiently engage the Libyan negotiators and draw the thing out until finally the negotiations collapsed amicably and the base remained.

Q: What was the initial assertion of the Libyans? They were saying,"You gotta get out!"?

JACKSON: Yes. It was about the closure of the bases. They certainly didn't need any money, goodness knows, with their oil revenues. The king was very hard put to spend existing oil revenues. He would put money into things like the vast Idris housing scheme, giant apartment buildings that stood empty for years when the bedouins had no intention of settling in permanent housing.

Q: One of the big things that came later was the military takeover. You were doing biographic reporting. Were we making any headway with the Libyan military at that time? This seemed to be the pattern, you know, looking at Syria and Egypt and with a king who was not very visible. Were we targeting the military as being the possible inheritors of this kingdom?

JACKSON: I would have to say frankly the Libyan military was very, very circumscribed. Access to them, as to many groups in the society, was not an easy thing. They were traditional. But, yes, the embassy had ties to them, but certainly not at the level of junior lieutenants like Qadhafi and Jaluud and the others that formed the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). There has been a lot of talk over the years about who knew Qadhafi, but in fact few, if any, foreigners did. This was a young person in his mid-20's, in the Signal Corps in Benghazi, and I don't think people were paying attention to that.

There was conventional wisdom that it would be an impossibility for the military to take over this vast complex of territory with virtually four capitals. I remember, when I came back to Washington after the assignment, the new Ambassador-designate, Joe Palmer, who had just survived the draining experience of being the AF Assistant Secretary during the Biafran War and was probably looking for a quiet last post, called me in and asked, “Now, could there be anything like this?” I said, “Mr. Ambassador, Libya has a very limited military, and you have to understand there are, in effect, four capitals. There's Tripoli, there's Benghazi, there's the new artificial capital that King Idris founded at Baida in Cyrenaica, and then there's Tobruk, where he also has a palace. They are far removed, one from the other, and there's no way that anybody could pull off such a complex coup.” (Laughter) He went out there and whammo! So much for conventional wisdom in the Foreign Service or my own perspicacity. I think that what I told him was fairly typical of the consensus—I don't think it was just me that was clueless.

The distances were truly great. The Ambassador during my time had a plane at his disposal which he used very effectively. The Foreign Ministry was located in Baida, that I mentioned. The embassy would typically go up to Baida at least once a month, and if you got on the plane you would attempt to schedule as many calls as you could in the Ministry. It was a very rough f light in a small plane over the Green Mountains, about a three hour flight, if I recall. There was an unvarying protocol requiring that with each call you would have the obligatory three cups of bilious Libyan green tea. After, say nine calls and 27 cups, the return flight was sometimes disagreeable.

Q: Did we have any particular issues with Libya at that time? I mean, did the Cold War intrude on the fact that we had this base? It was not just Americans, it was NATO planes that worked there too. Or was it just American planes?

JACKSON: My impression, Stu, is that it was basically American, but there was occasional use by other NATO members. Certainly the major focus was the U.S. This was the peak of the Vietnam years, of course. Vietnam was the moon, I think, as far as the Libyans were

concerned. I can remember an anecdote told about a demarche, perhaps apocryphal, that the Ambassador made on the King in Tobruk to explain the defoliation program. The King is reported to have said, “Mr. Ambassador, let's have lunch first.” After the lunch, he stretched out on his divan and said, “You may begin the demarche.” He promptly went to sleep and the Ambassador supposedly went through a very detailed defoliation message, after which the King woke up and they had tea. That was the level of Libyan interest in some of these things. Our major interests were protecting access for American oil companies, ensuring that the agreements were fair ones, and maintaining Wheelus as a vital training base for U.S. aircraft from Europe. It was an unparalleled area to practice all forms of air warfare, bombing, and strafing runs against desert targets. There were occasions that Bedouins wandered into the target areas. Some were killed, requiring fairly intricate diplomacy and compensation.

Q: Did Algeria as a neighbor intrude into Libya at all?

JACKSON: Truly not, to my recollection. I think the emotional concept oPan- Maghreb unity was a very vocal one in Libya at that time. There were rallies; the press was dominated by that, but in actual fact, I don't think that Algeria played that much of a role.

Q: How about with Egypt, with Nasser at that time?

JACKSON: My impression was that relations were not that close. Nasser, of course, was the formative ideal for Qadhafi and his generation. Qadhafi viewed Nasser as his model. Idris, however, was a different generation, far more conservative, aloof and stand-offish, although he spent many of his final years in Egypt in exile. He was outside of Libya at the time of the Qadhafi coup on Labor Day, 1969, taking the waters at the Kammena Vourla spa in Greece, I believe.

Q: Were there any particular problems with Tunisia?

JACKSON: There were quite sophisticated countries on both sides that essentially looked down on the Libyans and didn't have much to do with them, treating them instead as bumpkins and country cousins. You could drive over to Tunisia and the difference at the border crossing point was remarkable in both the efficiency of border posts and the general appearance. To get out of Libya, it was a real change just reaching Tunisia and you felt, by comparison, in the developed world.

Q: We'll pick this up next time when you leave Libya in 1968.

Today is the 27th of August, 1998. Dick, you left Libya in 1968.Where to?

JACKSON: That's correct. I headed back to Washington, first time I had been based here. The assignment was to INR, working on the Horn of Africa and North Africa.

Q: You were doing this from 1968 to when?

JACKSON: I did that from '68 through '70, probably.

Q: How was INR constituted in those days? I mean where did INR fit in? Were you helping with the Desk? Were you doing think pieces? What did you see as the role of INR?

JACKSON: It was a much bigger operation in those days than it is now. It was much more focused on longer analytic and predictive pieces. There was, of course, current intelligence as well. There was a meeting every morning that the Director of INR, then Tom Hughes, had with representatives of each of the geographic and functional areas to get the raw intelligence that he would then draw on in his daily briefing for the Secretary. I found myself in the African part of INR. The Africa group was very well motivated, a mixture of FSOs and civil servants. That was an excellent mix. There were people who had long experience in Africa on the civil service side, like Bob Baum, Tom Thorne, and Edith Scott. They provided a continuity which was a nice balance to the recent, first-hand experience that FSOs would ideally bring to it.

Q: I worked with all of the three people you named. I had the Horn of Africa in 1960-61. What were our interests? You had the Horn of Africa and anything else?

JACKSON: I did the Horn of Africa and parts of North Africa. North Africa, if memory serves, was sort of divided with Art Lowery, with whom I shared an office for part of the time.

Q: Let's stick to the Horn of Africa, which means Somalia anEthiopia. What were our interests there at that time?

JACKSON: Well, as we discussed before, Stu, in the Somali portion, basically U.S. interests were narrowly perceived as being preservation of Kagnew Station and bolstering the regime of Haile Selassie. Much of my focus was as an analyst on Ethiopia and on its stability. I spent a lot of time working with a sensitive form of intelligence piecing together the history and prospects of a Galla rebellion in southwestern Ethiopia, led by a brigand named Waco Gutu. I did a 30-page or so analysis of that remote conflict which was particularly commended, I think because it was the first time that an analytic piece had been written in that channel, and that caught the fancy of our then-ambassador in Ethiopia, Bill Hall. It seemed to me that INR at that time was quite a creative, exciting place to be. On the Africa side, my Director at first was Oliver Troxel, previously ambassador in Zambia, who was followed by Bill Harrop, who brought a sense of energy and dynamism to the office. I think that, combined with the fine editorial eye of Bob Baum, was a good combination that I enjoyed.

In retrospect, one wonders what influence the pieces we labored so hard over really had in the grander scheme of things, but at the time, as a first assignment in Washington, it wasn't a bad one at all. It gave me a chance to see how intelligence and the interagency coordination process meshed in the overall system. I remember one occasion, when I was representing the Africa section at the Director's morning meeting, it was the day of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. It was quite apparent to me that this was an

absolute, total surprise to all of the analysts sitting there. It was very interesting to watch Tom Hughes scramble to get some context before going up to brief the Secretary in a few minutes, and I don't recall that he had much time for Africa that day. I also enjoyed the interagency process of reaching consensus on Special National Intelligence Estimates (SNIES), of which at that time there were quite a few on the potential instability of Ethiopia and that kind of thing.

Q: By 1968-'70, what was the feeling about Haile Selassie and higovernment, its stability, and the succession?

JACKSON: I don't think there was a lot of thinking outside the box. I think there was a perception that, like so many rulers with absolute power, he had outlived his time and the reformist initiatives that he set in motion in the 1920s—widespread education and the transformation of Ethiopia from a medieval society to one edging into the 20th Century — were his undoing. The forces he unleashed were ones ultimately, in his old age, he couldn't control. It was a sad, Lear-like lesson with resonance today for a good many regimes around the world, I'm sorry to say.

Q: Were we concerned about any Marxist, Communist penetration in tharea at that time?

JACKSON: Well, we were of course in the midst of the Cold War and the client state extension of that in Africa. We had not yet flip-flopped with the Soviets, as we later did, between Somalia and Ethiopia. Yes, that was very much a part of the make-up there.

Q: You say you sort of parceled out the rest of Northern Africa. I would assume that Egypt would not be in the equation. I mean, that was always a Near Eastern thing. Sudan—where did that fit?

JACKSON: Egypt was and is outside the AF region, although the Maghreb countries have now been attached to it in NEA. Sudan I followed to some extent, but Art Lowery, who had served there, was certainly the authority on Sudan. We back-stopped and shared,

as you do in small offices. It was a learning experience, but one I was pleased, after two years, to leave after writing endless INTEL briefs, which is a rather passive exercise. I was reassigned to a desk in AF, which everybody said was an indispensable way station in a Foreign Service career. So I found myself as the most junior member of the North Africa office (AFN), which was then still part of the Africa Bureau. I was Desk Officer for Sudan, Western Sahara (or Spanish Sahara, as it was still called) and Mauritania, a grab bag of vast but relatively inconsequential territory.

Q: Back to the INR time. Did you have Libya, or having then servein Libya, was that part of your brief?

JACKSON: Yes, I think it was—definitely.

Q: When did the Qadhafi thing happen? That was during that period,wasn't it?

JACKSON: Yes, it did. I can remember because I was working on it.It was Labor Day, 1969.

Q: How ready were we for this and how did we respond?

JACKSON: We were extremely poorly prepared, in the sense that nobody had—we talked a bit about this earlier in the Libya section—really known these signals corps officers. These lieutenants—Jaluud, Qadhafi, and the others who were involved—formed the core of the Revolutionary Command Council. A number of them, Qadhafi included, were graduates of training stints at Leavenworth, but they had not been particularly identified there, nor was that an experience that led to lasting pro-American feelings on their part. Quite the contrary, the conventional wisdom, which we talked about before, was that a military coup was probably logistically impossible in that far-flung country with three, if not four, capital cities. I think we were so enmeshed in the tangible U.S. interests of Wheelus Air Base and a major expansion of the American oil presence—all the majors were in there—that there was an inevitable period of wait and see to determine what this coup meant.

Could we work with them? It became increasingly apparent that we couldn't. The people in the embassy at that time—Joe Palmer, the Ambassador, Hal Joseph, the DCM—really had rough going trying to relate to or build any bridges with these headstrong, quite radical 20-year olds.

Q: Did you find what you were getting from the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency at all helpful on this? Or were these people not on anybody's list?

JACKSON: No, they were not truly, to the extent I could ever determine, on anybody's list. Lots of people later took credit for having known them or identified them, but I believe that was largely self-serving.

Q: Were we tying them in at that time to a Communist or Marxist typof government or were we seeing them as indigenous nationalists?

JACKSON: There was fear of communist influence. It was the Cold War, after all, but no, they were fairly clearly one-of-a-kind, modeled considerably on the Nasserist group in Egypt. Certainly Nasser himself was the shining example for Qadhafi after whom he patterned himself.

Q: During this 1968-'70 period, were there any other particulaconcerns in this region, in your area?

JACKSON: In memory, my focus was largely the Horn of Africa—the Somali-Ethiopian dimension, the future of Kagnew and growing restiveness with imperial rule in Ethiopia. As well as, of course, the two liberation movements that were sporadically involved in a hot war against the Ethiopians in Eritrea with incursions from bases that they had at that time in Sudan, largely in the Kasala area.

Q: Did we see much of a problem with Eritrea as sort of an independence movement, or was that very important as far as we were concerned?

JACKSON: Certainly it was important. They were a guerilla force, although a divided one (ELF and EPLF) and to be reckoned with, but our eggs in those years were so much in the Ethiopian basket that we did not think in terms of eventual independence of Eritrea. In fact, that took at least another 25 years.

Q: After this time, you moved in 1970 to which Desk was it?

JACKSON: I moved then to the North Africa Office in the AF Bureau. I was on the Desk for Western Sahara, Mauritania, and Sudan, but I periodically helped colleagues on other countries; particularly Rocky Suddarth on Libya since we had served together in Tripoli and were good friends. It was a wonderful office. We had a very dynamic collection of officers. There was Paul Hare on Morocco, Frank Wisner on Tunisia, Art Lowery on Algeria, Charlie Bray as the Deputy and Jim Blake as our Office Director.

Q: You were there doing this from 1970 until when?

JACKSON: Frankly, I had the opportunity to take 10 months of Greek language training, so I cut short after, I guess, about a year and a half on the Desk in 1971 to go into Greek training. I found that, much as I benefited from operational experience on the Desk, the countries that I was responsible for did not add up to full-time employment. I don't like to be under-employed, so when the Greek possibility came along I grabbed it. I hasten to say that the tragedy in Khartoum occurred just months after I had left the Desk, which then became for my successor an immensely busy and sad period of time. In my time, relations were on a fairly constant level without a great press of work. I did visit Khartoum for orientation. I spent a couple of weeks with the Charge, Curt Moore, whom I liked immensely, and I later got to know the new ambassador, Cleo Noel. I remember giving a dinner for him and a Sudanese group just prior to his departure for Khartoum. Curiously, the then-Vice President of Kenya, Daniel Arap Moi, was in town and also came to that dinner.

Q: How did we see the Sudan fitting into our overall scheme in tharea as far as our relations were concerned?

JACKSON: The Sudan was a vast, undeveloped area of close to a million square miles, the largest country on the continent. There was great hope for Sudan—for its agriculture, that would become the breadbasket of Africa, and for its hot holes in the Red Sea that contained every form of undeveloped mineral deposits. People were always impressed with the vast Gazira cotton and ground nuts scheme south of Khartoum, which had been originally put in by the British, but was a model of what was possible in that country. In the end, the problems, ethnic and religious divisions, and the sheer vastness of Sudan defeated all efforts. It has never realized the potential and is today sadly in the grip of civil war, repression, and cyclical famine.

Q: In the Spanish Sahara, during the 1970-'71 period, was the SpanisSahara of any particular interest to us?

JACKSON: No, it was a watching brief. We, of course, had no direct interest or posts in that area, so there was very little to do on that. I also had Mauritania as part of my brief, where we did have a post which I also visited, but it was fairly laid back. We had a small Peace Corps contingent with, I think, one chicken sexer. But it was all less than full-time, and I cut that assignment short after not too much more than a year.

Q: You took Greek training, which I guess lasted for a year; fro1971 to '72.

JACKSON: Yes, I did. I have never regretted that. I enjoyed the Greek language immensely. The instructors were a marvelous couple—Takis and Aliki Sapountzis. I had the full Sapountzis 10-month treatment, and continued subsequently in the five years I spent in Greece to study Greek on my own. They gave me a wonderful base, both in the language and in understanding, through their eyes, that complex country. I went on eventually to get a very generous mark of 4+/4+ in Greek and, thanks in no small part

to that training, will be returning to Thessaloniki in retirement as President of Anatolia College.

Q: Was there a debate within FSI at that time whether to train in Katharevousa or in demotic Greek? This was very important politically, depending on when you were there.

JACKSON: I was there from 1972 to '77, so I spanned the last years of the military and then the restoration of democracy.

Q: They were pushing Katharevousa, which was a rather stilted language, as opposed to the more popular, demotic language. Was there a problem there?

JACKSON: Well, you're right. The Colonels, probably insecure about their own educational backgrounds, had inarticulately attempted to revert to Katharevousa, a hybrid Greek, that had been devised by Adamantios Korais as a way of whipping up nationalistic spirit at the time of the Greek independence in the early 1820s. But FSI split the difference basically between the two with something known as Kathemiloumeni, which was essentially demotic Greek, with Katharevousa overlays, an educated form of Greek, the Greek that you needed to read the newspapers, for example. I enjoyed it very much and I found Greek to be an immensely precise language, where you could say almost anything in one word, versus four or five in English.

Q: Well, now, often with instructors, you're coming away with a feel for the country. I know, I didn't realize it at the time, but when I took Serbo-Croatian I was taught by two Serb teachers, and I was getting a first-hand view of the hard-line Serb from my Serb teachers, which served me for a long time. I'm not sure about the language, but were you getting a feel for the country? Now this was a time of tension in Greek-American relations. Were you getting a feel for the Greek character and the situation from your teachers?

JACKSON: Well, the Sapountzises provided a very personalized sense of the Greek character and the Greece they had known. They had their own views and very strong

views. Greeks are people with opinions, as are Somalis, thinking about Africa. But, yes, I got definite opinions. I augmented some of them by independent studies and a modest Area Studies program that FSI had. I'm a great supporter of both language and area studies as the bread and butter that the Foreign Service brings to the table. I think those are extremely important. I am disappointed that they have been, in my view, clearly deemphasized in recent years. While I benefitted tremendously from the year of Greek at FSI, personally I think I would favor a system whereby people with an ability to learn languages are simply given a stipend, allowed to study it on their own in the country, and given a job if, at the end of the training period, they reach a certain level of the language on the test. I know that some other countries do that. The British Intelligence Services, for example, do that, and I think with good effect.

Q: I think so, too. You arrived in Greece in 1972. You were therfrom '72 to when?

JACKSON: I was there from 1972 to '77. I was the Deputy in the Consulate General in Thessaloniki from 1972-'75, then I moved to Athens for the second two years; first as Assistant Commercial Attache, and for the second year as Attache.

Q: As you saw it, what was the situation in Greece when you went outhere in 1972?

JACKSON: I found myself, of course, in a relatively small consulate. I had read of the indignation and outrage of Greeks with the Junta in books such as Eleni Vlashos' “House Arrest.” I have to say in those early years, looking around Thessaloniki, the indignation was not always apparent. I was a regular member of the Thessaloniki Rotary Club which was not a bad cross-section of professional opinion about political events, as well as a means to progress in Greek. I have to say many of those members were clearly benefitting from economic conditions at that time in their professions and were, at least to surface appearances, probably supporters. The press was controlled, but one has to say there was little visible criticism. I recall that at the time Papadopoulos was overthrown, the editor of the conservative “Ellinikos Vorras,” one Elias Kyrou, a controversial figure in press

circles at that time who had been an out-and-out supporter of the Junta, wrote in banner headlines that Papadopoulos had been the Trujillo of Greece. That was typical of the about-face of a number of Greeks in and out of Rotary.

But it is also true that Greeks you knew well, once they trusted you, would vent their frustrations about the Junta in no uncertain terms. I particularly admired the then- Director of the American Farm School, Bruce Lansdale, and he sometimes included my wife and me in gatherings of Greeks who tended to be very strongly opposed to both the military regime and what they perceived to be U.S. policy. This was, don't forget, at the time of Vice President Spiro Agnew's triumphal tour of Greece and return to villages in the Peloponnesus, from which his ancestors had come. The sarcasm among well-educated Greeks was palpable at that time, when U.S. aircraft carriers were visibly on the horizon in Piraeus Harbor and where they were home-ported and were seen as a prop in U.S. support for the Junta. I thought then, and still do, that people like Lansdale and institutions like the American Farm School, or for that matter Anatolia, do much to offset the vicissitudes of international policies. U.S. ambassadors and policies, often misguided, come and go, but such institutions are in it for the longer run and tend to forge more lasting common values and ties.

Q: How much did you feel there was bitterness about Agnew and company because, basically, they represented peasant stock from the wilds of the Peloponnesus? I mean, usually immigrants of any country, when they come back, are not looked upon very benevolently by the leadership who stayed within the country. Was there any of that?

JACKSON: Well, there is always resentment of the person who comes back in the big car and brags of his success, and Agnew was probably prone to that. On the other hand, looking beyond that, the ties between the U.S. and Greece are very tightly interwoven. I remember, for example, visiting villages near Thessaloniki on Mount Hortiatis which had known the ravages of World War II and, even more so, of the Greek Civil War, and for which the Truman Plan, the Marshall Plan, and the assistance that we rendered were

still, even then, very fresh memories. The hospitality that one would receive from the most modest Greek farmers, to share their feta cheese or their olives, and the evident pride in being able to offer something to an American was, in those years, still very strong and touching. It was a place that tugged at your heart strings in that respect. But the passions politically against the U.S. were extremely strong in the Junta years. I can tell you that, living as we did above the flag in the consulate general at Thessaloniki. The building was on the main coast road of Paralia and was named Vasileos Constantinou after King Constantine. Each of the three families in the Consulate lived on different floors above the offices, and at the time of the 1974 Cyprus crisis there were massive crowds of demonstrators - 80-100,000 - in front of the consulate, as well as reports of troublemakers with molotov cocktails. With two young children, we lived for much of that year at a house at the American Farm School, which proved to be a window on a different dimension of Greece.

Q: Who were the Consul Generals when you were there?

JACKSON: I had one Consul General—an absolutely marvelous man—Ed Brennan. He had originally come in through the courier service, had converted to Foreign Service, and had been DCM in the Central African Republic, or perhaps it was then an empire. This was his last post before retirement and he was, at the time, not talking about it, but courageously battling cancer. He was a generous and encouraging Consul General. His predilection was administration, and he very much encouraged me to spread my wings in the commercial and political areas. We had a partnership that I very much appreciated.

Q: Were there differences that you found between, say, the view of the Consulate General and our embassy during the 1972-75 time, particularly the early years?

JACKSON: That's an interesting question, a question with a background, that you have in mind in asking it, from other oral histories, I'm sure. The previous Consul General before Ed Brennan, Robert Fritzlan, had been at loggerheads and was probably eased out as a

result. Ed Brennan did not have that kind of conflict, to my knowledge, with the embassy. He was, perhaps, chosen because of his strong administrative bent and background. The embassy in Athens was, it was very clear to me although I rarely got down there, extremely divided and in turmoil. Henry Tasca had, by all indications, abdicated contacts with the military regime and turned them over almost exclusively to the CIA station, many of whom were of Greek origin and close to the colonels. That was resented bitterly by the political officers. It was not a happy place, and I was fortunate not to be part of it. Doing political and economic reporting as a junior to middle-grade officer at the consulate, I probably was not at a level of contacts or policy that would get me crosswise. In fact, the embassy seemed to be totally frozen out of most contacts with the Greeks, so far as I could see. So they were very welcoming of such factual reporting as I was able to produce. The large bulk of the Greek military was then and has traditionally been stationed in Macedonia, which was headquarters for the major Army Corps from which the Greek military leadership has frequently come. So the head of the Army there, General Phaedon Gizikis, for example, subsequently became the head of the Greek Armed Forces and briefly President at the end of the Junta.

I also put particular emphasis on commercial promotion. There were a lot of opportunities and scope for getting at them that just, for whatever reason, was not happening in Athens. So, we produced a steady stream of trade opportunities, and I had a wonderful staff of Greek FSNs who worked with me. One of them, George Georgiadis, subsequently went on to a career in the Greek service in the VOA here in Washington. So, those were, in sum, very productive years and a unique window on Greece. The reverse of starting in Athens and then going to Thessaloniki would probably have been very anticlimactic, but to approach it this way, to hone the Greek language, and then go to the big city was exactly the right progression. It was my observation that classmates from the Greek class who went directly to Athens really didn't have a similar opportunity to use their Greek and, in some cases, lost it. In Thessaloniki, you were forced to use it nonstop.

Q: Somebody who came from Thessaloniki who was in Athens part of the time was Dan Zachary. Was he there?

JACKSON: Well, Dan was the Commercial Attache in Athens. So I, in a sense, worked for and with him as his person in the north. We got along very well. He was immensely encouraging. We cooperated closely on the annual Greek trade fair that was held in Thessaloniki. Dan had a wide acquaintance in Thessaloniki and had served there before. He served there again later as Consul General. But in those years, he was not in a policy job. He was the Commercial Attache, and a good one.

Q: Were you at all reporting on opposition and dissident groupwithin your consular district?

JACKSON: Sure. We were reporting on everything we could get our hands on. It was a vast district. We were a very small Consulate. I was the only reporting officer. I was trying to follow the status of the Turkish minority in Thrace and would go to the Turkish areas in cities like Xanthi and Komotini. I was trying to follow the opposition parties, which were very fragmented at that time. I had contact with a number of very vocal members from the former Center Union Party of George Mavros.

Q: In the political spectrum there, was George Papandreou and later Andreas, but did they have much backing in Thessaloniki prior to the Colonels' taking over?

JACKSON: Andreas Papandreou was gaining steam with his fiery campaign rhetoric towards the end of the period that I was in Thessaloniki. I remember attending a rally that he addressed from a balcony at the Electra Palace Hotel and his charisma was apparent from the thunderous applause.

Q: This was after the Colonels were overthrown in July '74?

JACKSON: Yes. It was in that year, 1974-'75, my last year there, when he was starting to organize PASOK and make himself known. He was very charismatic to see across

a square full of enthusiastic Greeks, tasting for the first time in many years this kind of rhetoric.

Q: What about relations during the Junta with Turkey. Were there any times when the Army, I think it was the third Army, when relations were tense? Did you have the feeling you were on a difficult border?

JACKSON: Very definitely. There was a constant press war between the Greek and Turkish papers. There were periodic incidents of firing across the Evros River that runs close along the border. There was great tension over the discovery of limited oil in those years off Thasos Island and the commencement of off-shore drilling there at the Prinos One and Two sites. There were also periodic crises over seismic exploration by vessels on the contested continental shelf. It's extremely complicated because of the geography and the overlapping claims of both countries. So, yes, there were periodic tensions that both countries exploited for their own domestic political reasons.

Q: How about Americans going through? This was a time of considerable smuggling of hashish by young students and all who are coming out of the Middle East—Afghanistan, Iran and all that. Turkey particularly. Did that impact on you at all?

JACKSON: It certainly existed. We had a busy consular section. We had a full-time Consul, Roger Long - a very good colleague, no longer living, I'm afraid - and before him, John Peters. They were certainly involved with a number of such cases. On the other hand, the problem was by no means overwhelming, as it was next door in Turkey.

Q: In July of 1974, were you in Thessaloniki at the time?

JACKSON: In 1974, at the time of the Cyprus crisis, I was on home leave in Maine. I was in regular contact with the Consulate but missed the action altogether.

Q: When you came back in September, '74, or something, was it a different world?

JACKSON: It was a different situation. Things were beginning to open up. It was exciting. I was then preparing to go down to Athens. I had been assigned there, with a one-year overlap with the departing Commercial Attache, on the agreement that I would then be the Attache. The Commerce Department was not particularly pleased with that, but in the end, Monty Stearns, the DCM, a superb Foreign Service officer and one of the few who I would think of as a mentor in my career, prevailed, and I did go down there. Feelings of resentment against the United States after the changes occurred were widespread and, among the elite and the political class, a good deal of time was required to rebuild contacts frozen during the Junta. So, I think I benefitted by being on the Commercial side in those years, because that was more acceptable to Greeks. People were more than happy to do business. They wanted to expand commercially with the United States. Commercial work was new to me since I was basically a political officer and I stayed close to colleagues in the Political Section—Townie Friedman, Peter De Vos, and others. By comparison, I had the impression that my access to Greeks was simply earlier by virtue of being on the commercial side.

The major event that impacted on me in Athens was the collapse of Lebanon. Those were the worst years in terms of the situation there, and resulted in the complete exodus from Lebanon of U.S. regional companies, some 300 of which settled in Athens, at least temporarily. It was absorbing to assist in their resettlement and to work with the Greek government to devise a legal status for regional companies based in Athens and operating in the Middle East. We did manage ultimately to assist in preparation of Law 89, which gave them a status, and many of those companies stayed on for awhile to do regional business from there. Frankly, it didn't really work because they were outside of the Middle East and it was a long way to go, nor were the Greek infrastructure and incentives that attractive. So, over the years, most companies drifted away to Cyprus or London or back to the Middle East. But in those years, the situation, for example in Cairo, was so bad that the companies simply couldn't operate there. There wasn't the infrastructure. The few companies that did go there periodically came up to Athens to place phone calls because

they couldn't call headquarters from Cairo. Now of course, Cairo has a modern telephone system and things have changed.

The influx of U.S. companies provided a wonderful hunting ground to recruit for and expand the U.S. Pavilion in the annual Greek Trade Fair. We doubled the pavilion size for a year or so. I believe we got up to 60 or 65 exhibitors, and displayed some airplanes in front of it one year. This line of work was largely operational and quite satisfying since you could see results, unlike sending reports to faceless bureaucrats in Washington. One story from that time which amuses me occurred during the Watergate period. I was probably still in Thessaloniki and went to inspect the Pavilion just before an opening reception with the Ambassador and many dignitaries. The theme for the Pavilion that year was waste materials and waste treatment. I looked up and, as you came in the Pavilion, there was a large photograph of President Nixon, by then no longer in office, and under it in large letters, “Recycling Waste Materials.” I switched things around in time, but it always amused me.

Q: Speaking of Watergate, I was Consul General during that time, 1970-'74, in Athens, and I have the distinction of issuing a subpoena to Tom Pappas, who was a Greek- American businessman who ran Esso Petroleum. He was involved with the Committee to Reelect the President. Anyway, he was part of the Watergate process. Did Tom Pappas' outfit figure in your work?

JACKSON: I knew Tom very well from the Thessaloniki period. He was Mr. Esso Pappas, and the refinery along with the Republic (Hellenic) Steel plant represented a major U.S. investment in the area. I was never involved in the kind of difficulties you mentioned, although I knew how politically active he was in Republican circles. I got along quite well with Mr. Pappas and always found him supportive on matters of the trade fair or contributions to community activities. I believe he was unfairly made a scapegoat in the aftermath of the Junta.

Q: Who was our ambassador while you were there, from 1975 to '77?

JACKSON: The ambassador was Jack Kubisch, a very decent career ambassador. It was his last post. He'd been ambassador before in Central America. Greece was new to him, and he wasn't a particular hellenophile, but a measured, moderate presence; probably just the right choice for that period of quiet restoration, not flashy, somewhat distant. I, of course, plugged in more directly to Monty Stearns, who was tremendous fun to work with and took a real interest in the junior and mid-level officers in his charge. It was a period marked by tragedy. I happened to live just around the corner from the CIA Station Chief who became a good friend.

Q: You're saying you'd known Dick Welch?

JACKSON: I had known Dick Welch slightly in Washington before going to Greece - I think when he was in Cyprus and had talked with him about his hopes of eventually getting to Greece. He was an immensely educated, interesting person. We were together, with most of the embassy staff, at the Ambassador's Christmas party, on the night he was killed. Dick left, and I was also the duty officer for the embassy at that time, and minutes after we got home, got a call that he had been assassinated at the gate of his house just around the corner. That was a very sad thing, for which they have never caught the culprits, although the so-called 17 November group took credit for that and subsequent killings. As a sidebar to that, I was later provided information through a relative of someone who had been in a prison who had heard another inmate discussing Welch's assassination. I passed the details and names involved to the embassy security officer. He turned them over to the Greek authorities and my source soon disappeared. I felt that was poorly handled.

Q: I often had the feeling, even under the Colonels, the Greeks really didn't pursue terrorists. There were Palestinian terrorists and internal terrorists. For the most part, they seemed to want to get them out of the country. The fact that they haven't been able, even up to now, to do something about this November 17 movement that was responsible for a

number of assassinations of Americans, struck me as being Greek policy as opposed to ineptitude.

JACKSON: Well, I think that the November 17 group could have beemuch more aggressively tracked down.

Q: What was your impression because you would have been part of the country team when they were involved in this? My impression when I was there was that the CIA had a major influence in the embassy at that time, vis a vis the Greek Government, which always struck me as being pernicious. And our military seemed to have an inordinate number of Greek-American military officers who tended to side with the Greek Colonels and all of that. But you were there from 1975 to '77. It was a different ballgame. You had a Karamanlis government coming in. How did you find the embassy at that time?

JACKSON: I share your view of the earlier period when the station appeared to be managing the relationship with the military regime, and the embassy was quite bitter and divided. I think, after the restoration of democracy, there was a totally new cast of characters. Towards the end, as Tasca was leaving, Monty Stearns was sent out to sweep with a new broom. With the moderate, calm presence of Jack Kubisch it was a very different country team. The relationship with the station became more collegial. All of the earlier individuals shifted. Dick Welch was clearly hand-picked as somebody of judgment and deep background in Greek culture and language. When he was killed, they brought in Claire George from Lebanon. Claire, leaving aside his later problems with the Congress, was someone of courage and wry humor.

Q: George was caught up in Central America and the Iraq conflict?

JACKSON: It was Iran-Contra. He was accused of not providing full testimony, and that dragged on for many years. But in Greece, Claire was a consummate professional, very much a team player in that country team. He and Monty Stearns seemed to have a good professional relationship and were also friends. So far as I could see, that team set the

situation right. That's not to say that there weren't periodic crises and surprises. That's the fun of working in Greece.

Q: Did you find that with your Greek colleagues, albeit you were doing the commercial work, which, you know, commerce and Greeks are synonymous, did you find that you were being continually berated for being an American with the embassy and all that?

JACKSON: No, I did not. With some, I would have very heated and long arguments. They tended, though, not to be the business types. They were the lawyers, the doctors, the professionals that one encountered in Athens. With them, yes, lots of angry debate, but few that you couldn't, in those years, bridge by friendship. I didn't feel, in the job I was in, that I was shunned by anyone that I was conscious of. On the other hand, the business people were something else again. They were strictly business and interested in enlarging their share of the pie. Greeks are consummate businessmen and traders. The different segments of the Greek business community were very interesting to see. Some were worlds of their own. I'm thinking particularly of shipping.

Q: Niarchos and Onassis and all that.

JACKSON: I, of course, did not know those people, but I knew some of their top lieutenants. Not having done full time commercial work before, it was fascinating to see the Hellenic Shipyards, for example, with computerized laser cutouts simultaneously doing the hulls of four vessels coming down the line. It seemed to me a world-class operation, although the bubble later burst in the shipping industry.

Q: Did you run across a problem I ran across, in minor terms in doing consular work, of Greeks who had a claim to American citizenship hoisting the Greek flag or American flag for commercial benefit? I mean, was this a bit hard to handle sometimes?

JACKSON: In a country like Greece, a crossroads country, there were every manner of middlemen and con artists that one had to be very careful about - American, Greek, third

country, the works. In that respect, commercial and consular work are not unalike, I'm sure.

Q: What about the Greek government? I recall, for example, how inept the Colonel's government was in dealing with commercial matters. For example, they decided to collect port duties on all foreign ships. That was pretty much it for the yachting trade, which relocated to Turkey. Things of this nature. I mean, they just would make these laws without really understanding the consequences. How friendly was the Karamanlis government?

JACKSON: I think they were overwhelmed by the job of setting right so many years of total mismanagement by the military, but I think that they, from the vantage point that I had, were immensely talented, many of them. The overall economic czar at that time and a strong person was Minister of Coordination Papaligouras. He was a real intellect, a fascinating, driven man, with a great deal of humor, working and smoking himself, clearly, to death. They had a former naval officer, whom I had slightly known through the Farm School, as Minister of Merchant Marine, Papadongonas, who had been imprisoned and probably tortured throughout the Junta period.

In retrospect, the mismanagement of the Junta period was near total. I had a friend from the Thessaloniki years, a Greek Colonel, who had been stationed in Kozani, where much of the tank force in that part of the country was located. He noticed that cadmium batteries had not been replaced after their expiration and the night vision sights on tanks were inoperable. He began to fulminate with his superiors and to poke around, realizing that the problem was general and that tanks everywhere would be vulnerable if attacked at night. If memory serves, he went to higher and higher levels, eventually reaching Patakos, who didn't want to hear about it and put him in jail. Simply because of corruption, they didn't want to hear these kinds of problems. It shows you, at the core, how rotten it was.

Q: The thing that struck me was you think a military dictatorship should be somewhat efficient. It just wasn't. I mean, it was awful! Were you sensing concern about Andreas

Papandreou at the embassy at that time? Was this an embassy concern or were we just carrying on and watching?

JACKSON: These were Democratia years, although PASOK was there and growing. Frankly, my only exposure to Papandreou was the rally I observed in Thessaloniki. I was on the commercial side. It wasn't my beat, and I had my hands full with the commercial companies.

Q: You left in 1977. Where did you go?

JACKSON: I left in 1977. The Department was not swift in coming up with an assignment or maybe I wasn't plugged into Personnel. So, I said that, having done commercial work without any particular economic grounding, I would like to take the six- month economic course. I was assigned to that, but I was out-of-phase and had four or five months to bridge. I ended up in the Soviet Affairs Office, for which I had no background, but it was an interesting experience. I was in charge of monitoring the movements of Soviet diplomats in the U.S. It was the time of tight travel restrictions, and we had to grant case-by-case permission for them to travel outside the confines of New York City or Washington. This was strictly reciprocal for the confinement of U.S. diplomats in the Soviet Union. It was literally an office of different colored pins on a map for each Soviet official that would go to Bellingham, Washington to work in a fish plant in return for an American going to Vladivostok. In the end, it was immensely trivial and not satisfying, so I was happy to stay only a brief period.

I went into the six-month economic training, thinking I would consolidate the experience that I'd really enjoyed in Athens. The course was very challenging, with a succession of immensely good teachers and lecturers. Personally, I think that the congressional mandate to replicate the equivalent of a college degree in economics limited the effectiveness of their training. In practical terms, this meant an exam on a full course every 10 days or so - whether money and banking or integral calculus. I felt this detracted greatly in terms of

synthesizing the material and, after six months, being able to recall it. At the conclusion, they talked to me about various economic assignments and proposed something in EB working with tropical fruit. At that point, I had an opportunity to go back to work for David Newsom, my ambassador in Libya, who was by then Under Secretary for Political Affairs. It was a chance to work on the 7th Floor in areas I was interested in. I became special assistant for Africa and international organizations, again also backstopping Rocky Suddarth, the Executive Assistant, on NEA issues.

Q: In sitting there in Soviet Affairs with your pins, did you have a list of equivalent destinations? In other words, had somebody done this or did you say “Well, we want to go here and somebody else wants to go to Frunze and we'll count that as being Tucson.” I'm just curious as to the working of this.

JACKSON: It was absolutely at that level of detail. Heaviness, I would say, without implying criticism, was the hallmark of our Cold War relations. Of course, the Soviets had constituted all of these bizarre state trading operations, like Amtorg, and there were many of them, usually platforms for espionage. One had to look at every single request, whether to go down to Long Island or to speak at a university. Coming from the kinds of things I had been doing, it was a surprising bureaucratic experience, but a good bridge to the economic course.

Q: Was there a list? Did we have this equals that? Or had somebody done this, or was it—say they want to go here, let's figure out what's the equivalent? Was it an ad hoc thing or had we developed a list?

JACKSON: I remember a lot of paper in that office. I don't remember a specific list, but that was the approach. Everything was strictly reciprocal and the pins on the office map were benign by comparison with restrictions our people lived under in the USSR.

Q: Working for David Newsom, what was his operating style? I mean,what was your position and how did you see how he operated at that time?

JACKSON: Well, David Newsom, as I said when we talked about Libya, is a diplomat's diplomat. He is the consummate professional, well prepared, conscientious, judicious. On the other hand, seeing him in a bureaucratic Washington setting was very different from seeing him as ambassador in charge of a substantial embassy in the critical period of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and challenges to Wheelus Base and to U.S. oil interests. Which is to say that the top Foreign Service officer, which Newsom was then - Under Secretary for Political Affairs was the senior career position, - is himself or herself only a cog in a vast Washington bureaucracy. The context for my saying that is what was going on at that time. That is to say, intense jockeying and rivalry between the NSC under Brzezinski and the very lawyerly, studious approach of Cy Vance as Secretary. This put much of the burden for coordination at the working level of government on their deputies.

David Newsom was truly going in every direction. He was point man for the Iran hostage crisis. He was also faced with the assassination of Spike Dubs in Afghanistan, a very turbulent period. Mr. Vance's working style, as he's famous for, was to get in early, and to read everything in a careful, lawyerly way, which meant that his inner circle had to get in even earlier to be on top of things, which meant in turn that special assistants had to get in even earlier. So, I can certainly remember coming into that silent department building at ungodly hours of the morning to pick up several cubic feet of overnight cable traffic and reports for my areas alone.

Observing close up the pressures and constraints that Mr. Newsom worked under gave me, I suppose, what they call an invaluable 7th Floor perspective, but also a better and more humbling appreciation of where the Career Service, the Foreign Service, really does fit in. I mean, it is a paradox that as somebody like David Newsom, through ability, chance, and hard work, rises up to the top, less and less are they master of even their own agenda

or daily schedule. He was jerked around to meetings here and meetings there with little notice, if not dispatched abroad.

I accompanied him for a quick trip back to Libya in that period. The first and probably only authorized visit, by a senior Department official to Libya in the Qadhafi period, at least that I remember. We were there to probe and take soundings on issues such as the continuing dispute over the Lockheed C-130 aircraft that we had embargoed for many years.

Q: They're still sitting on the ground in Marietta, Georgia.

JACKSON: That's right. Well, that was one of the focuses. We were supposed to meet with Qadhafi. This, I should say, was before the final freeze with Libya. We were still in the probing stage, 10 years after the Qadhafi coup. We still had a reduced Interests Section, headed by Bill Eagleton, in Tripoli, which was later closed for good, although the Belgians continue to represent us there. We were to meet with Qadhafi, but were informed that his mother had died. This was not the first time that had been reported. We met, in the end, with his deputy, Abd as-Salaam Jaluud. Jaluud was an extremely slick customer who offered little of substance. I don't think the mission accomplished a great deal, but was probably the last serious probe of Libyan intentions by the U.S. before all dialogue was broken by PanAm 103. An airline strike forced us to fly out via Rome, where we spent a day or two with the Ambassador at Villa Taverna. And that was the trip, short, but interesting to watch a person of Newsom's level operate on a compressed trip like that.

Q: Your beat was what? The United Nations, InternationaOrganizations and Africa?

JACKSON: And Africa, which kept me busy. As I mentioned, we were in an intense period because of the hostage crisis in Iran. We were all back-stopping Rocky Suddarth on that and working six days and sometimes six and a half-days a week during that year.

Q: This was 1979 to '80 about?

JACKSON: Yes, 1978-80. I had a Landrover Jeep I had had in Somalia, Libya, and Greece, and, because it had four wheel drive, often picked up Mr. Newsom in the worst of the blizzards, sometimes getting him in there on a Sunday.

Q: You must have spilled over into 1980 because the hostage crisiwas in November, 1979.

JACKSON: That's right. I left the office in the summer of 1980 to go to the UN. Thinking about my work in those years on Africa, I was in somewhat of a delicate position in the sense that Ambassador Newsom had been a hands-on Assistant Secretary for Africa and had an abiding interest in the continent. He wanted to stay quite close to it. We had a new political Assistant Secretary for Africa, although he had been briefly an FSO - Dick Moose. Newsom gave me a watching brief for the Africa Bureau, which meant attending Dick Moose's morning staff meetings to keep him informed. Moose surely didn't welcome that and, I'm sure, viewed me as a sort of spy, although it is now commonplace for P staff assistants to sit in on geographic bureau meetings. The power balance has probably shifted away from the bureaus in these years.

Q: It was not a secret that Moose had been close to Senator Fulbright. He'd been one of his assistants, having left the Foreign Service early on. Then he was given the top Administrative job and was considered by the Foreign Service to have done poorly in it. So the Africa thing was a way of moving him out of the way. At least, among professionals, Dick Moose was viewed with a certain amount of concern. Am I putting words in your mouth?

JACKSON: Well, I'm sure that's the context and probably the reason for the watching brief. I'm a pretty laid-back, non-pushy person, at least I consider myself to be, but I know he complained a number of times about me. I was often in the position of taking back AF Bureau papers for this change or that change. (Laughter) I had a few ups and downs, but it was very interesting, and, of course on a personal level, Dick Moose is a very easy person, a very human person to get along with. The Department then was a

contentious place. It still is, of course, but then the overlapping and conflicting interests among bureaus, each one jockeying for advantage and trying to cancel the other one out, seemed particularly acute. The referee for most of those disputes at that time was David Newsom. People jocularly referred to him as the Department's number one desk officer, but, day after day, Assistant Secretaries would come up locked in conflict and Newsom, Solomon-like, would have to arbitrate between, let's say, Reggie Bartholomew in PM and Pat Derian in Human Rights, who were on the opposite sides of most issues. Or Dick Moose and Reggie Bartholomew. It was an eye-opener for me to see how the place worked, and many of the disputes were essentially juvenile and over turf.

We had very good relations with the Secretary's Office. The Secretary had a first-rate staff around him in the form of Peter Tarnoff, Frank Wisner, Jack Perry, and Jerry Bremer. They were very efficient people—quick to move paper and very supportive. Arnie Raphael was Mr. Vance's Special Assistant. As an office, we had a smooth interface, made possible, I think, because of David Newsom's very good relations and temperamental fit with Cy Vance.

Q: What about—you're sort of keeping an eye on Africa. South Africa and Apartheid were still there. Was this, and with human rights, I would have thought this would have been of real concern from the very top. What was your impression of how we were handling that?

JACKSON: Well, we were trying to manage all parts of a constituency that was quite divided. This was the Democratic period, of course, with Andy Young at the UN. It was a period of great support for the Sullivan principles, providing an accepted code of ethics vis # vis apartheid for U.S. companies operating in South Africa. Reverend Sullivan would frequently come in and talk with Ambassador Newsom, showing support for what emerging African leadership there was. There were some contacts, I remember, with South African officials that came to Washington. I can remember meetings Newsom chaired which I sat in on with Ian Smith of Rhodesia and with Chief Buthelezi of the

Inkatha movement in South Africa. It was before the shift that came with the Republicans and the Chet Crocker initiative and was kind of the end of the prior period.

There used to be, and I'm sure still is, a daily book prepared by State for the President. President Carter had very deliberate work habits, would get up very early in the morning and pore through it. Frank Wisner used to be in charge of getting that publication ready, if memory serves. One day he said to me, “Look, we have nothing for the book and have to produce something. Write something fast.” (Normally, the bureaus did this, but had provided nothing that day.) I wrote up an account of the distribution of powdered milk among the refugee camps in Hargeisa in Northern Somalia, which I was interested in. The next morning, I was astounded to find, in the President's handwriting, a long note that he'd written out on this. He wanted to know more about the milk and its distribution and how the refugees were getting it. That seemed to me to capture the great strength and, perhaps, weakness of President Carter. He was deeply caring and interested in all topics, and yet did he really need to be spending time at six in the morning on such questions? I'm not sure. I can't imagine President Reagan doing that.

Q: How did you feel our relations were with the United Nations durinthe Carter period?

JACKSON: I think relations were very good in the sense that there was great support for the UN. We have oscillated, it seems to me, at the UN between periods of confrontation and periods of building-up. Moynihan and Kirkpatrick come to mind in the confrontational mode, and Andrew Young and Don McHenry, who followed him, were certainly in the build-up mode. I say that without criticism on either side. There is a lot of room for improvement in the UN and maybe the stick-and-carrot is needed, but at that time Andy Young was vastly popular with the Third World, the non-aligned majority at the UN. USUN was a busy place in terms of outreach and consensus for the kind of policy we were talking about in Southern Africa. Andy came acropper then on the Palestinian issue and Don McHenry replaced him. I parleyed the brief experience I had gained in IO Affairs working for David Newsom into a political advisor job at USUN.

Q: How did the Andy Young episode with the PLO play out? I mean,were there any reflections of this at the Newsom level?

JACKSON: Certainly there were. I mean it was a bombshell. The way Young handled it deepened the crisis. While it occurred at the UN, it was fundamentally an NEA issue, and I was not privy to all the details. It was also a time of multiple crises. I can remember the pressures surrounding the relocation of the Shah of Iran and the medical issues of where he'd be treated, and whether he could gain admission here to the U.S., and all the hospital arrangements. A procession of people would flow through Mr. Newsom's office, like Ross Perot of E Systems, who was very involved in Iran, or Joseph Verner Reed, later ambassador in Morocco, who was brokering arrangements for the Shah through David Rockefeller at the Chase Bank. I believe at one stage, to preserve anonymity, somebody unbelievably registered the Shah at the New York Hospital under the name of David D. Newsom. It shows you the craziness of the period. I can remember another time, thinking of improbable crises, when they were repairing the roof of the State Department. We were there working on a Saturday or Sunday, and a chunk of the roof broke through and hot tar poured down and landed on a Persian rug, one presented by the Shah to Larry Eagleburger. He had accepted it on behalf of the Government and it had ended up there. The rug was sent out for restoration but was stolen, I believe, from the cleaning establishment. Given the climate of suspicion about gifts from the Shah, the issue was dropped.

Q: Was there another development during this time. I don't know whether you had any insight into this, but I'm thinking of the Soviets moving into Afghanistan in December of 1979. When one looks at it in retrospect, one sees that it shows sort of the basic failure of leadership in the Soviet Union, and was one of the causes of its demise, actually. Do you recall anything about how we were looking at what the Soviets were doing in Afghanistan at that point?

JACKSON: That was part of a series of earthshaking events that came along confirming what people had long thought and believed about the USSR. I was not personally involved in that, however.

Q: Well, in the summer of 1980, you went to the United Nations.

JACKSON: Moved up to New York.

Q: What was your job?

JACKSON: I was Political Advisor, one of a number of Political Advisors in the Political Section of the Mission. My brief was the UN Fourth Committee, the Decolonization Committee, as well as a Security Council Committee, the so-called 421 Committee that followed the South African Sanctions Regime. I was also given a general brief to follow and report on the Non-Aligned Movement. This was, of course, after Don McHenry had succeeded Andy Young. Demanding, precise, and a Foreign Service professional compared to Andy Young, McHenry was committed to building up the UN and using it as a forum for U.S. outreach, particularly to the developing countries. So he had a lot of interest in the Non-Aligned Brief that I was given. I enjoyed his encouragement and I think eventually became one of the people he had confidence in and relied on.

Q: You were at the UN from when to when?

JACKSON: I was there from the summer of 1980 until summer of 1983. But a good chunk of that, which I'll come to, was an extended sabbatical.

Q: It was sort of the tag end - when you arrived - of the Carter Administration. Did you feel that the Carter Administration paid attention to the UN and felt it was an important adjunct to our foreign policy?

JACKSON: Yes, definitely. The Carter Administration was, from what I could see, pro-UN, particularly as U.S. administrations go. This was, of course, the Cold War. The UN was hamstrung by U.S.-Soviet divisions and use of the Security Council veto. The shoe had turned from the earlier years of Soviet vetoes to a period of U.S. vetoes, and we were constantly on the defensive on issues, particularly of the Middle East.

Q: What about, in your particular brief, let's take decolonization first. I would think Namibia would be an issue all the time. McHenry basically did that, didn't he?

JACKSON: Right. There was a contact group on South Africa that he was front and center in. There were a number of us working on it. I was peripherally involved with the contact group. Decolonization, of course, is a vestige of the UN. There was then a vast decolonization bureaucracy and committee structure, as well as a fixed agenda they went through each year, often without real-world impact. Literally some of the territories on the decolonization list that were debated annually had smaller populations than the staff of the committees considering them, particularly the small Pacific islands territories. We were regularly drawn into the Decolonization Committee debate on Puerto Rico, which they insisted on working through each year with numbers of witnesses from Puerto Rico, from splinter parties that didn't represent mainstream opinion. But the UN I found to be, at least for the initial year or two until you realized the repetitiveness of it all, quite an exhilarating place to be. I enjoyed multilateral diplomacy, the experience of spending time in the Delegates Lounge and mixing it up simultaneously with diplomats from many countries. It was easy to find contacts for lunch and, if you've worked at political reporting abroad in a bilateral setting, it was like plucking fruit from a tree to be in such a large setting and an important dimension, I think, for Foreign Service officers to have.

Some of it was funny. We would frequently be lobbying on close votes to turn out countries of like mind with us to make sure the vote went as we hoped. For the littlest countries, that could mean finding the one delegate who might also be a student at Columbia and perhaps helping them get a baby sitter in order to get to the UN and be present for that

one day of the week. But it was fascinating to see how coalitions were formed and how they changed and split. It was very interesting, as I got into the Non- Aligned brief, to begin to understand how that grouping of countries has really shaped the workings and functioning of the UN and actually set its agenda through a series of prior regional meetings of the Organization of African States, for example, or the Arab League. These regional meetings generated resolutions which were then ratified at a non-aligned meeting with considerable horse trading. The outcome was an agreed document of the then-101 Non-Aligned States, now a larger number, which they brought to the General Assembly, so countries like the U.S., not party to those groups, were confronted with a fait accompli to which they could make little input. Also notable at that time was the beginning of a non-aligned core group on the Security Council, which depending on Council elections in any given year, ranged between six to eight members. Hypothetically, with both Yugoslavia and Malta or Cyprus in the same year, nine members, a majority of the Council, was also possible. In this way, the Non-Aligned succeeded in shifting the balance in the Council from formal, transparent, public meetings to the behind-the-scenes informal meetings, in the process altering the way that key institution works, in my view.

Q: During this time - let's stick to the Carter years - was the non-aligned movement considered to be sort of a tool of the Soviet Union or did we feel it was something with which we could work?

JACKSON: Well, don't forget, this is just in the aftermath of the 1979 Havana Summit, at which Castro was the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, a highwater mark for radicalism within the NAM. The Chairman comes in with the Summit for a three-year chairmanship, so Castro was still in the Chair at that time. This was also the apex of Soviet influence in the Non-Aligned Movement, pushing the so-called “natural ally” thesis that the natural ally of the non-aligned is the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union could count on automatic votes from a core of non-aligned countries, probably about a dozen. A litmus test was always who voted for the Soviet position on Afghanistan. Countries like Ethiopia, Angola, Vietnam, and Cuba would always vote for that. We, by no means, wrote off the

Non-Aligned, but U.S. supporters or friendly countries within that movement were more amorphous and their vote correspondence with us was nothing like the near-100 percent that the Soviet Union could expect from Vietnam or Cuba, for example. A generally well-disposed country, let's say, like Morocco, Singapore, or Ivory Coast would probably not vote with the U.S. on the full spectrum of annual General Assembly votes more than, at most, 50-60 percent of the time, and probably not even that. So, the Non-Aligned was a particular focus of the Carter years, but my own overlap with that administration while in New York was brief. Let's say I got there in August and the election was November and Don McHenry and company were out of there close to the first of the year. I can remember Don had a lunch for a dozen or so people that he had worked closely with. He was literally, as we ate, dismantling the Permanent Representative's apartment in the Waldorf. He had a very short deadline to get out of there. Jeane Kirkpatrick was arriving in two days or so. There was an atmosphere of hostile takeover, at least that was the sense people had who were there during the transition. There was a lot of uncertainty among holdovers about their future, naturally.

Q: Including yourself.

JACKSON: Myself included, in the sense that Don had originally brought me to New York on the recommendation of David Newsom, and so I was none too sure of my standing and future. Jeane Kirkpatrick soon arrived and was, as you would expect, unsure of what she would find in the way of holdovers, and there was a period of sizing up. She was a very quick learner, but came to the job quite new to both multilateral diplomacy and managing a complex mission, or at least so it seemed to me. I remember when she first got there, I accompanied her as notetaker for a call on the visiting Foreign Minister of Ivory Coast. He began the conversation by saying, “What I'm going to tell you is very sensitive and for your ears only.” She instructed me, “Now, I want no record of this. This is going to be sensitive. Put away your pen.” The Minister had not meant this literally, of course, and had planned to deliver a message to the USG. He was visibly crestfallen that there would be no record of the conversation. Ambassador Kirkpatrick proved to be a fast learner, however, and a

dynamic leader, although one with a quite different point of view from her predecessors in terms of the UN and the accountability of countries for their votes, whether in the UN or in the Non-Aligned. She famously took issue with a standard Non-Aligned communique which criticized the United States a number of times by name, and wrote to some 60 or 70 of the more moderate member countries, calling them to account and asking them to publicly disassociate from the communique. That was a first. It was her way of putting them on notice that the UN is not an echo chamber for empty verbiage and that states are accountable for their rhetoric. This coincided with a welling up in the Congress of dissatisfaction with the UN and the slowness of reforms, and an effort to link aid levels to individual countries with UN voting. This is easy to legislate but difficult to implement since aid levels usually represent a careful balance of U.S. interests in a bilateral context. Let's say in a country like Morocco, where we have a major VOA transmitter, rights to use military bases for transit in wartime and other facilities, the level of aid reflects those trade-offs. When you introduce voting patterns in the international organizations as a further criterion, bilateral misunderstandings often result when their equilibrium is breached.

In any case, in the first months of Jeane Kirkpatrick's tenure, work was clearly not flowing to me. I happened to see a Department announcement regarding the first year of something called the UNA (all capital letters) Chapman Cox Sabbatical Program. Being in New York at the UN, I read that as United Nations Association. I called up one of the deputies, Ambassador Dick Petree, who had worked with UNA, and said, “Dick, this really interests me. I'm going to put in a proposal.” He called the New York UNA Office, and they said it must be their Washington office handling it and they would pass on his recommendation. I put in a very complicated UN book topic, assuming proposals should be UN-related, and a month or two went by before I got a call that I had been selected. I called Petree, and he called the UNA and thanked them and, they were delighted to have helped. Then I went down to Washington and I was introduced to Una, not UNA (which had been miscapitalized) Chapman Cox. It was the first name of a delightful lady who, I later learned, had gone to India in the 1920s to shoot a tiger without a weapons permit and

had been briefly jailed. The American consul had gone the extra mile to spring her from a rat-infested jail, and as a result she was offering to provide the Department with 10 million dollars to fund annual sabbaticals for the Foreign Service if she liked the first winner and their projects.

The Department had arranged a fancy lunch with the Under Secretary for Management and the three first selectees, of which I was one. She turned to me at one point and said, “Now, son, what's your project?” I outlined my proposal on the impact of the Non-Aligned Movement on the functioning of the UN, and she said, in effect, “That's one book I'm never going to read.” Anyway, she was a wonderful lady, and I went on to write my book on the UN system, and she to endow a permanent sabbatical program. Had I known the sponsorship, I might well not have put in that particular topic, but it was a great experience to stay in New York for a year, to read widely, and to do a book which turned out to be quite a challenge to complete both the research and writing in one year.

Q: Did you feel this was in a way useful to you, to sort of get yoout of the early months of the Reagan takeover of the UN?

JACKSON: I felt mostly it was useful to me as a way to replenish an intellectual capital that had gradually been depleted since college. Interesting and broadening as the Foreign Service is, there is little time to read deeply or to think through a complex topic like that. It expanded me in a way I lived off intellectually for another 10 years of Foreign Service. But, yes, it was good to be on my own in that transition period, which wasn't an easy one at the UN. The project allowed me to travel abroad, and there was a very generous stipend to attend key Non-Aligned meetings, particularly the New Delhi Summit in 1983, which was an important turning point with the Indians reasserting a moderate direction over the Movement after the Cuban years. It was a very useful experience. I had strong support in writing the book from the Council on Foreign Relations that put together a study group under Paul Kreisberg, that helped me immensely in writing it. In later years, I've had a number of opportunities to speak on non-alignment. I went to a symposium in

Yugoslavia at Novisad and, in fact, as recently as this year, spoke on non-alignment to the new diplomatic corps of Bosnia. I'm not sure, as you yourself know, that writing a book is a particular advantage in the Foreign Service or gives you an added half an inch to stand on when you get in an argument, as it might in other professions. On the contrary, Foreign Service culture is such that, if you write a book, you're probably mildly suspect as a wooly-headed academic.

Q: What about your feeling about the Non-Aligned Movement? You were picking it up at a particularly interesting time, when in Afghanistan the Soviet Union basically overreached. It was no longer as easy to talk about the benevolence of the Soviet Union. Did you find this at that time?

JACKSON: Well, as I said, Afghanistan was a litmus test. You could tell by Non- Aligned voting with the Soviets on Afghanistan, who were the sell-outs, who were the client regimes. The Soviets, as you know, had started in the early years to try to co-op some of the major Non-Aligned states like the Indians and the Egyptians, but they found that they could not command unswerving loyalty from them or from the Indonesians and other large states. So, they retrenched and went for lower-cost proxies - Angola, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Cuba - and used them as virtual puppets, in my view, within the Movement, as kind of a Trojan Horse. My original title for the book was, “An Aligned View of the Non-Aligned,” which I think is more accurate than “The Non-Aligned, the UN and the Superpowers,” but the publisher insisted on the word “Superpowers” to sell books.

Q: Did you still sort of belong to Jeane Kirkpatrick at this point?

JACKSON: No. I was totally on my own. I kept the same apartment I had while at USUN, and had a stipend for research and a secretary to help me with the book and travel, but I was entirely separate. Jeane, as a real academic, happened to take an interest in the book and was very supportive, read it, suggested dimensions to explore, and did a nice blurb

for the jacket. I also got to know her, to some extent, through writing that book, since my sabbatical lasted longer than originally projected.

What happened was that, as you may remember, Iraq was slated to follow Cuba as the NAM chair and to host the Baghdad Summit. That collapsed, however, as a result of the Iran/Iraq War. India took it over, which set back the summit date, which meant I couldn't complete the book within my allocated year and cover the Summit. To bridge the gap, I went back to work at the end of that year for six months or so at USUN as a kind of add- on to their Political Section and then finished the book. Going back to USUN in the Kirkpatrick years was very interesting. I found a different cast of characters, more ideological, people like Ken Adelman, Chuck Lichenstein, and Carl Gershman.

While there, the public delegate who I was assigned to backstop in the General Assembly was former Governor of Connecticut and Ambassador to Spain, John Lodge, a rock-ribbed conservative. One day I was sitting behind him in the General Assembly and the Polish speaker launched into a diatribe against the United States. A rebuttal was required, but there was only a very short time to prepare it before the end of the session, perhaps an hour. So Lodge told me to write it, which I did as quickly as I could. I took it to Jeane Kirkpatrick, who said, “This is fine, but I have points to add.” She doubled the length of the text, and I rushed back to Lodge with two minutes before he had to stand up. He's a slow speaker and complained, “I can't complete this in the allotted time and will not be gaveled down. Reduce it by half.” While I was doing so, he said, “While you're doing that, I'm going to add a little peroration at the end.” I had no say in the latter, and when he reached that point, he said something like, “We Americans will not truckle to the godless yoke of red communist atheism. We will not stoop in the hellholes of totalitarian fascism.” It was stentorian rhetoric that left the General Assembly gasping in silence and shocked and outdid even the most ideological of the new administration.

Q: In your book, did you deal with the issue of Jeane Kirkpatrick saying, “We're going to hold you accountable for your votes?” Were you able to see any effectiveness in their tactics?

JACKSON: Yes, I attempted to. The book really divided into three parts: tracing the evolution of Non-Aligned influence, looking at the way it has shaped the UN, and finally, examining U.S. and Soviet strategies and approaches for dealing with the Non-Aligned. So, in the U.S. section, a part of it was the issue of accountability and the linkages between bilateral and multilateral diplomacy.

Q: I was wondering whether you picked up, particularly, on the political appointees—you mentioned Lichenstein. As I recall, he was the one who made the famous statement, “The United Nations ought to pick up and leave. We'll be on the dock waving a fond good- bye.” Did you have the feeling that these were people who'd just as soon not have the United Nations?

JACKSON: There was a lot of grandstanding. I can remember that. I also recall there's a little garden with a wall across from the UN. It may now be the Ralph Bunche Memorial or park. But there was a proposal at that time by Mayor Koch to inscribe the wall with an inscription from the Bible, something to the effect, “And let the mighty nations of the earth bow down and magnify the glory that is Israel.” You can imagine the inflammatory impact of that kind of proposal upon the Arab and Middle Eastern nations in the UN. But that goes with the territory—all of that.

Q: Was essentially Israel and our support of Israel the stick with which we were beaten again and again? Zionism is racism and that sort of thing. Was this a motif of this time?

JACKSON: Yes, definitely. The issues of Southern Africa and of the Middle East and, of course, the North/South issues as well, the issues of disparity of income, aid levels, and so on.

Q: What was the feeling among the professionals, of which you were one, towards this new look at the United Nations, in our representation? Did you feel that it was about time, or that we were screwing up the works? Was there any feeling?

JACKSON: The Foreign Service is not big on change. We get in ruts, and when changes come along, people are critical and suspicious. Generally, there was skepticism and resistance, but basically the steam was coming from Congress. Jeane Kirkpatrick was reflecting that and playing to it, as well. The U.S. ambassador in New York is in an important sense, it seems to me, a spokesman with influence on how foreign affairs are perceived in the United States. The person in that job is at the intersection of foreign policy and U.S. domestic opinion and inevitably plays a political role. Jeane Kirkpatrick, whether you agreed with her or not, was because of her articulateness and willingness to tackle issues head-on, at the cutting edge, defining a lot of issues. As we said before, there is a pendulum in our relations with the UN. It's constantly shifting and correcting. I think it degrades the UN to go too far on the side of simply brushing off everything there as rhetoric and saying, “Oh, it doesn't matter. We don't have to object to it, and we're just going to use the UN as a convenient place to collect intelligence or do bilateral business.” It has to be more than that. So, in a circuitous way, the accountability thesis could be considered as building the UN role up, if it was applied with common sense. On the other hand, the likelihood of Congress legislating inflexible formulas for payment of U.S. dues or linkage of aid levels and voting weakened, rather than reinforced, the UN. But to answer your question, sure there was resistance.

Q: We're in 1983. Where did you go to next?

JACKSON: In 1983, I went to Morocco and stayed eight years.

Q: How did you get to this long period? This is one of the longest involvements in a country other than, say, the Soviet Union or Vietnam, that I have run across. How did you get assigned to Morocco? Let's start in 1983.

JACKSON: Well, in 1983, I had been back in the States for six years. It was time to go abroad, both in a career sense and also financially to compensate for the years in New York. I had two children, one then in college and one approaching college. To keep them there, I clearly needed to be abroad. There was an opening in Morocco, and I was certainly interested in North Africa. It was a place close enough that the children could visit on vacations, and so I would be able regularly to have my family with me. And so I applied, conscious, however, that among Arabists in the mainstream of NEA, Morocco and the Maghreb in general were regarded by many as left field. Morocco, in particular, was viewed as not as authentically Arab as the Mashreq. It was looked at askance as a place where people spoke French, and was, I think, not a place that ambitious Arabists (which I was, in any case, not) steered themselves toward at that time.

Q: This would include Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, more or less.

JACKSON: Yes, it would, more or less. I think there was always that perception, perhaps more strongly about Morocco because it was a Kingdom. It was also known as an extremely pleasant place to live, not requiring the sacrifices that service in other parts of the Arab world entailed and that are enshrined in the NEA culture. In any case, I did speak French rather than Arabic, so I was never really part of that crowd.

At that time, there was a high profile political ambassador who by all accounts evidently had experienced a somewhat difficult year of settling into Rabat. He was Joseph Verner Reed, a prot#g# of David Rockefeller at the Chase Bank who, with his help, had come in as a political ambassador under the Republicans. I had heard reports from people coming back from Morocco of various ups-and-downs, and difficult morale. I met briefly with the then-Assistant Secretary for NEA, Nick Veliotes, when I was assigned to Morocco, who rolled his eyes and observed that I certainly had my work cut out for me. But I frankly was delighted to get to Morocco. I picked up a car, a Peugeot, in Paris, with my two children and drove south to Morocco, which was a wonderful approach to that country, watching the terrain change and Moorish influence grow as one traversed southern Spain, then

crossing from Algeciras to Tangier, and arriving late at night in the midst of Ramadan. It was a wonderful introduction. En route, we stopped, by prearrangement, for lunch with my predecessor, Bill Marsh, who briefed me at some length on pitfalls ahead.

Q: What was your job there?

JACKSON: I was Political Counselor. We had a strong section of motivated young people. Michael Parmly, my Deputy, who went on to be DCM in Luxembourg and Bosnia and is currently Political Counselor in Paris, Doug Green, who's since been Consul General in Dhahran; and Alex Wolf, who's currently one of the Deputy Executive Secretaries. They were a talented team which was great for me to work with.

Q: Before you went out, I imagine you had a little time to read your way into the files back on the Desk and all. What were American interests, as you saw them, before you went out and what was the situation there before you arrived?

JACKSON: Well, Morocco, as, John Waterbury wrote in his book, “Commander of the Faithful,” in the late 1960s, was still “a country waiting for an explosion that never comes.” That is, there was, still tremendous power concentrated in the hands of one man, King Hassan. Inequalities of wealth in the country were quite striking, and there was always the issue of internal stability. This was, of course, still the midst of the Cold War, and Morocco was perceived as a moderate, Westernized country. Next door was its rival, Algeria, supported by the Soviet Union. They were pitted against each other in the Western Sahara, a conflict which had festered for many years. At the time I was there, it involved a major part of the Moroccan army occupying static defenses behind an earthen wall called a berm, which stretched around most of the towns of the Western Sahara. There was continuing fighting, during my time there, in the form of a succession of lightning strikes by Land Rovers and light armed vehicles with machine guns against the berm, occasionally punching a hole through it. It was a sporadic conflict that festered in a depopulated and

moon-like desert region, but it occasionally involved cautious sorties by the Moroccan Air Force.

Q: Ambassador Reed, I never served with him but I remember there was something about - maybe it was a crisis while you were there and you will come to it - but he was away from his post and people were saying it was not a good thing and all that. In other words, he was one of a few political ambassadors that gained particular notoriety during this period. I wondered if you were picking up, other than rolling eyes, any feelings about him.

JACKSON: Well, yes, of course. Ambassador Reed was a larger-than-life, still is, a larger-than-life character, given to dramatic gestures, unorthodox in his approach to diplomacy, and with very strong detractors and supporters. Before my time, there was a bulletin board in the Operations Center with egregious messages from the Reed embassy. It was often the case that those were not messages that he had ever seen or had any part of. It was also the case, however, that many of his detractors, including a number of the ambassadors from the neighboring countries who would bad mouth him incessantly, were the first to write him for recommendations and his personal intervention in seeking their own next assignments. I know that personally, because I heard at least two of them bad-mouth him and then I saw their obsequious letters seeking preferment.

I was, of course, in his time the Political Counselor. I wasn't DCM and did not have any responsibility for managing his interface with the embassy or, beyond the Political Section, how the place ran. That would have been a much harder job than I had. I had the feeling sometimes that a few who served him in that capacity may have made themselves indispensable to him by perhaps exaggerating the downside and faults of others in the Mission, rather than necessarily building them up. That was certainly not true of all, however. By the time I arrived there, as is the case with many political ambassadors taking “ownership” of their first embassy, he had evidently settled into his role. At least the kinds of stories I had heard about, I did not personally observe. Ambassador Reed was hyperactive, and his day consisted of innumerable calls, social events, meetings, and

outreach to Moroccans. He frequently did not get to write those up in the form of telegrams or reports, so often his meetings, even with the King, went unreported, or only sketchily reported to Washington and that did not, perhaps, inspire confidence there or reinforce his credibility. As I and other newcomers gained his confidence, however, I believe we can take some credit for persuading him that he would be better served to take one of the younger FSOs along as notetaker and to write the cables. As a result, Michael Parmly, from my section, went to most meetings and provided a detailed record of what, in fact, was said. Reed traveled constantly throughout the country and, while being ambassador is by no means just a popularity contest, he was clearly better known to Moroccans than most of our ambassadors, before or since. Certainly he saw far more of King Hassan. Frequently he would take along some special gift to the King to augment his collection of exotic fountain pens or perhaps a golf item that he was able to have inscribed for him from the President because of close ties to both the Reagan and Bush White House. That helped with the King, who valued small gestures. A fault of Reed, or JVR, as he was known, was that he would rely overly on a small cadre he came to trust in the Mission and tended to exclude others whom he didn't. That generated some resentments. We had a C-12 aircraft in the Mission at that time, and there was fairly constant conflict about use of that plane since it was a DOD asset. I think many of the Defense Attache Office pilots, who were responsible for it, did not have an easy time.

Q: Would you divide the time you were there into different periods or was it much the same thing in relations with Morocco during this period? Should we stick to chunks of time, do you think?

JACKSON: I think it's better to take it chronologically, because I was in three quite different jobs. In that initial period, we had innumerable high-level visits to Morocco that were stimulated by the Ambassador. I believe there were more members of the Cabinet and congressmen who visited than for almost any other post, worldwide, except the biggest ones like London, Paris, Bonn, and Tokyo. For quite awhile, there was practically a Cabinet-level visit each month and innumerable other visitors. It was a great exposure and

I was very involved in visits of both Haig and Shultz. At one point, both the Ambassador and DCM were away and, as acting Charge, I accompanied Attorney General Ed Meese to call on the King, and spent half a day at the Palace.

I went with the ambassador on a particularly memorable trip to Mauritania and Western Sahara, stopping en route in Senegal. I think his frenetic style surprised our hosts, Charlie Bray and Ed Peck, but it was a very interesting trip, and at the conclusion we visited Laguerra, an outpost across from the Mauritanian port of Nouadhibou, and a vital point in the Western Sahara dispute. I remember at the conclusion of that trip, we had a dinner outside Nouadhibou with a leading businessman who honored us in local custom, pulling liver from a living camel calf and serving it fresh with Johnny Walker Black Label. Another anecdote occurred when Reed was entertaining the young Shah of Iran who, because of threats against him, was jumpy about security and had requested that nobody else be present. By mistake, an advance security team was just then scoping out the residence for a visit from Vice President Bush, and as the Shah looked around the garden, there were literally men in every tree. The major development of that period was, however, what you were referring to, Stu, that is, the union in 1984 of Libya and Morocco, the treaty of Oujda. It is true that the Ambassador was at that time on leave in Maine and that the announcement of the treaty, uniting as it did our closest ally in North Africa, Morocco, with our perceived enemy, Libya, came as a major blow and was not in the least understood in Washington. There had been fragmentary indications that such a union might be in the works, but no timeframe was attached to it, and basically the embassy and the announcement caught us flatfooted. In fact, at that exact moment, we were having a periodic consultation with Embassy Algiers and, altogether with the DCM and the section heads from that embassy, we were all in the classified embassy conference room, discussing North Africa as the announcement of union with Libya came across the wires. More improbably, we had seriously considered having this joint meeting at Oujda, near the Algerian border, where the Moroccans and Libyans actually met to sign their treaty. It was interesting for colleagues from Algeria, with its heavy-handed control of information,

to see that there were also obstacles to getting information in a monarchy like Morocco. In fact, the union was a logical step for the Moroccans to take. Qadhafi had been funding and supplying military hardware to Polisario guerrillas in the Western Sahara and, through this union, the King terminated that supply relationship with one stroke. He bought himself several years of relative peace in the Sahara, during which Morocco consolidated its hold, and then conveniently abolished the union when it suited him in 1986, by accepting the visit of Israeli Prime Minister Peres to Morocco.

Q: There was a period where you had the United Arab Republic, where Egypt joined up with Syria and then with Yemen. There were various permutations of unions between countries which never amounted to much. I heard of this Moroccan/Libyan thing—this strange Middle Eastern thing. What does it mean? Were you looking at the UAR as an example to see if this was another one of those?

JACKSON: The impact of it was just what you said. It was superficial and nothing lasting, but try telling that to Congress. They didn't buy it and could not appreciate that it was a paper union only and a very shrewd tactical move on the part of the King. He used it to dramatically extend the berm, the earthen wall around the Sahara, until ultimately it walled off 90 percent or more of that vast area. So, I think it was a bum rap that the Ambassador was criticized to the extent he was for being out of the country at that time. It was presented that he was at a resort, or something, in the States, and not working sufficiently hard at his post. He was, in fact, as hard-working a person, in terms of hours spent on the job as any that I have worked for. More importantly, in the aftermath of Oujda, emissaries like Vernon Walters arrived from Washington to inform the King of strongly negative U.S. reaction to the union, but failed to deliver the message as bluntly as intended. Reed ultimately did so, documented by an embassy notetaker.

The ambassador could also be receptive to ideas from the staff. I remember, when the ambassador in Paris, Evan Galbraith, issued a shameful and self-serving blast against the career service, I suggested to Reed that he do a rebuttal. He published a strong letter

taking sharp issue with Galbraith and defending the Foreign Service in “The Wall Street Journal” within two days, the only ambassador, political or otherwise, to be heard from.

Q: During this short-lived union between Libya and Morocco, werthere any real government exchanges or was it only on paper?

JACKSON: No, it was really a largely paper agreement, although there was always talk about joint councils for this or that. Qadhafi was such an unpredictable character that I'm sure the Moroccans had reservations about getting too close. At the popular level, my impression was that Qadhafi was largely dismissed as a buffoon and figure of ridicule. At least his appearances on Moroccan television walking alongside King Hassan in his pseudo-Bedouin get-up were usually met with laughter in the cafes. Moreover, their overriding objective, as I said, was to terminate, at least for an extended period, his support of the Polisario, and that was achieved. Later, there was, of course, a wider Maghreb union called the Ummah Union, which was formed involving the five countries of North Africa, that is including Mauritania. But that too, despite elaborate organizational schemes, foundered on two obstacles - the unpredictability of Libya and deep-seated Moroccan-Algerian tensions.

Q: How was this union between Libya and Morocco received from whayou were gathering in Algeria?

JACKSON: The Algerians were suspicious of anything involving Morocco. This was before the rapprochement that occurred later in 1987-88 between King Hassan and Chedli Benjedid. So, yes, they were suspicious. The Maghreb is, after all, two evenly-balanced powers of roughly equivalent militaries and roughly equivalent populations - that is, Morocco and Algeria - and then the surrounding smaller states of Tunisia, Libya, and, to a lesser extent, Mauritania, that periodically jockeyed to maximize their influence in a kaleidoscope of changing alliances. So the Algerians were definitely concerned.

Thinking about this period - and I stayed on a total of eight years in Morocco - I was able initially to meet through the Ambassador's contact and access almost everybody in the Moroccan government, albeit on the periphery. As I stayed as Consul General in Casablanca and DCM back in Rabat, many of the same officials became useful contacts in my own right. Morocco, in particular, is a place of long history and long memory. In our usual Foreign Service pattern of two or three year assignments, frequently lasting contacts aren't made, so I found by staying eight years there that I began to be looked on as some kind of expert on Morocco, which, of course, I was not. I don't even speak Arabic, but the important thing for me was the continuity and length of stay. I'm a great believer in that and found that there and, earlier in Greece for five years, I got far more out of the longer assignments and I believe gave more to the taxpayer in return through broader contacts and more in-depth knowledge.

There were some things in that first period in Rabat that were interesting. The Consul General in Tangier and the headmaster of the Tangier American School got into, for one reason or another, a non-speaking relationship, so I was assigned as the embassy member of the school board, which was a wonderful pretext to get out of the capital city about every other month and visit the northern part of the country, quite a different atmosphere. It was a neglected region of the country which the King had not visited for several decades. We had a policy of not traveling to the contested Western Sahara at that time unless we accompanied members of Congress. In retrospect, it was a strange policy that Foreign Service officers responsible for reporting on the region were prohibited while Congress, both members and staff, could travel at will, but I was an escort for congressional delegations on several occasions and got a fleeting sense of the situation down there. I was also sent as the embassy's delegate to a conference on security of embassies that was held in Abidjan. The main Washington speaker was Oliver North before he became a household word. There was also a summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which King Hassan hosted in Casablanca. I was sent there to monitor it as a consequence of my previous assignment at the UN. In fact, many of

the Third World delegations there came from New York and were precisely the people on whom I had drawn in writing my book on the Non-Aligned, so I was able to effectively cover the conference, at which Egypt gained readmission into the OIC after the break following Camp David.

Q: When you arrived during this first period, what was your impression of King Hassan and his way of operation, both within his own government and also towards the Americans?

JACKSON: Hassan is a master politician, who has operated for years by cooptation. He is also - if it is a question of defending the interests of Morocco or of the Alaouite throne - ruthless. He had two close attempts on his life in 1972 and '73. He has subsequently acted as his own intelligence chief and minister of defense and personally controlled the issuance of live ammunition to the army and police. It's a complex country with deep social, ethnic, economic, and tribal cleavages. He has controlled it with a firm hand and - one has to say - brilliantly, looking at his survival and that country's relative prosperity in comparison to much of the rest of the region.

Q: You surprised me by saying that there had been some decades since he'd gone up to the north, which would include Tangier and Casablanca and all?

JACKSON: No, by the north I meant the Tangier region and the Rif Mountains, the locus of unease, economic hardship, narcotics production, and possibly Berber separatism in the mountains. It was to those areas that the King was sent as a crown prince to quell unrest. But more broadly, I think that since World War II, there has been a basic shift in the power base for the monarchy in Morocco. Throughout four centuries of Alaouite rule - that is the family of this king - the primary support for the monarchy was in the Makhzen or imperial cities. Government was traditionally located wherever the Sultan happened to be, and he moved about in a procession - or Harka, as it was called - throughout the years. Moroccan history has been an ebb and flow in a continuing power struggle between the Makhzen or central government in the cities and the outlying territory or bled, comprised of

adjacent, pacified, and friendly tribes and an outer rim or bled-as-siba of less subjugated, more independent-minded tribes. Since roughly World War II, that pattern has been reversed and stronger, more fervent loyalty to the throne today comes from the bled, the countryside. Support for the monarchy is less obvious in the larger cities which have mushroomed. Casablanca, for example, went from 250,000 at the time of World War II to between four or five million today. The King still does continue the Harka pattern, in the sense that in a given year he rotates through the Kingdom, perhaps wintering in Marrakesh, moving in the spring to Fez, back to Rabat, for his birthday in Casablanca in June, and in the summer to the beach palace in Skhirat. So tradition hasn't changed in that sense. Tangier and the North, however, are conspicuously absent from the itinerary.

Q: I would imagine that a political officer there would have problems in that decisions were handled by the King, whom only the Ambassador saw. You could make your contacts, but perhaps these weren't involved in the action.

JACKSON: That's a fair enough assessment, Stu. It's particularly true, in my view, about Rabat, because Rabat is much more a government town than even Washington is. If you're a division director in the Foreign Ministry, for example, you may not know the King's real thinking on issues in your area of responsibility. You're in a difficult position when the American embassy political officer comes in. You don't want to seem ignorant, but you certainly don't want to be quoted on something that isn't the policy. The embassy officer may also be privy to information from the ambassador's audiences with the King, so most MFA directors tended toward caution and a bureaucratic response, although on a personal basis, they were fine colleagues. So, you're right, it was not always an easy dialogue, and it isn't the easiest place to get information. The Moroccans frequently are reluctant to answer questions where it would help their image to be responsive in areas like human rights or various prisoner issues - whether Polisario or Algerians held in Morocco or Moroccans held in Algeria. They could easily provide basic answers, but they

don't. I was thinking, earlier in our conversation we were talking about getting one of the political officers into the Ambassador's meeting with the King.

Q: Reports that came out of Embassy Rabat were said to include references to the equivalent of “our King” and were cited by some as examples of the disease called “localitis.” Was this something you had to keep an eye on, to see that we weren't over-reporting the Moroccan point of view and losing the American perspective? Was this a problem?

JACKSON: Well, let me say, Ambassador Reed was somebody who spoke at high speed and often what first came to his mind. He had great enthusiasm for Morocco and a bit of an “if-it's-good-for-General-Motors-it's-good-for-the-country” approach to his assignment and role. He did use the phrase, “our King,” occasionally, but I think too much was made of that. I don't feel that in saying that flippantly there was necessarily a confusion of Moroccan and U.S. interests. I think this was seized on by detractors. As we said, before, there was a feeling that this was a place of creature comforts, traditionally a post reserved for political ambassadors, and too good for the career service. It somehow went against the NEA puritan ethic, and the career COM's sweating out their time in Mauritania or Algeria envied and resented perceived imperial trappings and “high living” in Rabat. But, as I mentioned, the louder they carped, the quicker they'd write for assistance in landing next jobs. There was also the famous comment of Senator Eagleton before my time that Reed was a “24-karat nitwit.”

Q: The reputation of Morocco - this wasn't just me but others - was that King Hassan really liked to have political ambassadors as opposed to professional ambassadors because he could win them over, whereas a career ambassador maybe had been around the Arabic-speaking world for a while and was more jaundiced about it. This may be one of those professional stories put out to knock the non-professional. What do you feel about that?

JACKSON: It's definitely the case that the King appears to have a strong preference for political ambassadors. There have been career ambassadors - Dick Parker was one - who had difficulties in Morocco. Basically, I think, the King's preference in this regard reflects the tendency of Moroccans to personalize and for the King to assume that a political appointee will be an intimate of the President through whom Morocco will have a more direct pipeline into the White House. Through such a conduit, diplomacy by secret mission and exchanges of gifts is more feasible. Perhaps also in his mind is the calculation that, with the right intermediary and the right personalized approach, a hidden door will open to Camp David levels of U.S. assistance. The average career ambassador simply will not have those means at his disposal. The King is probably also more at home and congenial with a political ambassador, typically someone of means, like Reed or Angie Duke, who might share his interest in racehorses or luxury automobiles.

Speaking of horses, later when I'd come back to Rabat as DCM, I accompanied Armand Hammer of Occidental Petroleum, in the year before his death, to see the King. He was convinced that the last great, unexplored, geologic basin that would be petroleum-bearing was the Draa Valley running through the Western Sahara. He was determined to get a seismic concession from the King. Mr. Hammer must have been in his late 80s or even 90s and the King in his 60s. There was obvious appreciation in the King's eyes of the sheer energy of Hammer, who was still a major player and recently returned from Moscow. I think it gave him great hope. Hammer began the meeting by tabling what looked like a deck of cards with photographs of prize racehorses, and much of the conversation dealt with horse flesh. It was inevitable that Occidental would get the seismic concession, and the finesse with which it was done was interesting to watch.

Q: You mentioned all these visits coming to Morocco. Morocco is really not very far up on our priority list, so I would assume it was a fun place to come to. I mean, the King and all made it that way.

JACKSON: Well, it was the Cold War, and U.S. interests were still very much defined in those terms. We had some tangible assets in Morocco. There was an access and transit agreement for use of certain airfields in Morocco in the event of military emergency. In fact, that agreement was not exercised during the Gulf War. It wasn't needed because of facilities in Spain, but also nobody wanted to test it by making a request to the Moroccans and being turned down. We also had under construction in my years there the largest radio transmitter in the free world at an extended VOA site outside of Tangier. That was a major investment, able to beam radio programming across the Soviet Union, Africa, and the Middle East. Its value, of course, was open to question later, with the collapse of the Soviet Union. I recall going up to the VOA site with Senator Moynihan, who did not appear particularly convinced by VOA staff answers to his tough questioning on why we needed that kind of investment in the post-Cold War era.

Q: Dick, what you're saying sounds as if it could apply to many countries. I mean, every country has an importance. One could say this about Indonesia or Pakistan. I mean, you can always work up rationales for strategic importance. But Morocco does seem to have been sort of a center for the glitterati. Wasn't it Mr. Forbes of “Forbes Magazine” who had big parties at which he flew in guests from New York and that sort of thing. I mean, was there an underlying attraction to see and be seen, that this was a good place to go if you were somebody?

JACKSON: Well, you're falling, with all respect, into the trap I mentioned earlier of not taking Morocco seriously because it's there on the western edge of the Arab world and a very pleasant place to be. It's not a central player, perhaps, and not a crucible for regional conflict like the Mashreq. It's, in your words, a place of glitterati. And, yes, it's an extremely hospitable place to be. Yes, many people like Malcolm Forbes, Yves St. Laurent, Mark Gilbey of Gilbey's Gin, Princess Sabah of Kuwait, Guy de Rothschild, or Barbara Hutton have made very elaborate resort homes in Tangier or Marrakesh. But that does not detract from the fact that this is still an important chunk of real estate and a place with which the

United States has enjoyed friendly, bicentennial relations. There's a famous letter from George Washington to the Sultan that the Moroccans love to quote - it's republished in the Moroccan newspapers every July 4 - in which George Washington says something like “We are a small and struggling nation, but with the passage of years and if God favors us with prosperity, we hope one day to be able in small measure to repay Morocco's generous assistance to the United States.” It's a country, in other words, that we have a lot of common history with. Morocco put substantial military on the right side in the early Congo crises, Shaba I and II. They fought with us in Italy during World War II and bore the brunt of the assault on Monte Casino. They fought with us in Korea. They also participated in the Gulf War, one of the few Arab countries alongside Egypt to do that.

Q: I have to say that last year, we're talking about 1997, there were Moroccan troops in Bosnia. I'm asking these questions to get you to respond, which you're doing.

JACKSON: Let me say, also, Stu, when you say it's a playland for glitterati, that it's one thing to have an estate and go for a few weeks annually to play in the sun, and it's something else again to live and work in a country and culture for three years or, in my own case, eight years. Over the longer term, you find that many of the superficial, identifiable similarities between Morocco and the West are deceiving, in that the reality of Morocco's culture is entirely different. Paul Bowles quoted in one of his books, perhaps “The Spider's Nest” about Fez, lines that capture the ultimate unknowability of the place: “You say you're going to Fez and when you say you're going to Fez, it means that you're not going to Fez, but I happen to know that you are going to Fez. Why have you lied to me, oh you who are my friend?” It suggests to me the many levels of the Moroccan onion skin. In that sense, it is truly an exotic country, where as a foreigner, the longer you stay, the more you begin to realize what you don't know.

Q: My question of why you had so many visits there is not really about lifestyle, but the fact that you had so many members of Congress and others going there and I would suspect that there would be a sybaritic impulse to go there as opposed to the Congo, or

somewhere else. The people who came—I'm talking about the government people—were they on real business, including Senators and all?

JACKSON: With the volume of visitors we had, I have to say that you saw all kinds. Morocco is imminently accessible. It's a very useful rest stop at the beginning or the end of a long trip through Sub-Saharan Africa. It's on the way to the Middle East. It's easy to combine with Europe. Geography explains a lot. There were a number of delegations who simply would go to Marrakesh because of its Palm Springs-type climate, palm trees, and the world-famous Mamounia Hotel. They somehow assumed that the King would bestir himself, fly there, and accord them an audience. Naturally, the role of an embassy in brokering those kinds of expectations was often a difficult one. Among delegations, there were serious, worthwhile ones from the Congress who had done detailed homework and were prepared. In that category, I recall people like Senator Lugar of Indiana, or Steve Solarz when he was Chairman of the House Africa Subcommittee and was fact- finding on the Western Sahara. Such visitors contributed a great deal to our dialogue with Morocco, and the embassy encouraged their visits. There were others who, frankly, did not. I recall a large delegation headed by Howard Wolpe and including the late Mickey Leland who spent so prodigiously in the Marrakesh souk on rugs, furniture, and sculpture that their U.S. Air Force jet couldn't take off because of the added weight and had to jettison some $3,000 of fuel on the tarmac and refuel en route to make their next destination. I thought it was a disgrace and flagrant waste of taxpayer money. Such abuse, in my experience, is not uncommon, and yet the Department's lavish focus on the annual budget appropriation in practice enforces a conspiracy of silence.

Q: What about during your first tour here? The Israeli equation athat time - how was that treated?

JACKSON: Well, Morocco has had a major Jewish community for centuries, and it is still the largest Jewish community in the Arab world. After the Moors were thrown out of Spain in the 15th century, much of the Jewish community there also fell back to Morocco,

although large groups went to places like Thessaloniki, Greece, where vestiges of their ancient language, Ladino, still survive. Many Moroccans, typically with names beginning with Ben, originally were of Jewish origin, from Spain and, by and large, have coexisted over the centuries with Muslims in Morocco. The King's father, Mohammed V, was a staunch protector of the Moroccan Jewish community against the Germans and Vichy French during World War II. While the Monarchy still prides itself on being a protector of the Jewish community, in actual fact, with the independence of Israel, most Moroccan Jews went there or settled in France, Canada, the United States, Brazil, or elsewhere. Today there are probably eight to nine thousand Jews living in Morocco, largely in Casablanca. The King, however, retains a strong interest in and contacts with the several hundred thousand Israelis of Moroccan origin, hoping that they could one day play a decisive role in Israeli politics. Because of conditions when they settled in Israel, most joined the Likud rather than Labor and have in no sense been a Moroccan fifth column. Former Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi is a case in point. When I arrived in Rabat, Moroccan-Israeli ties were kept under close wraps. They existed, but were not publicized. It was difficult to telephone to Israel, and there was no direct travel between the two countries. The situation evolved with the 1986 visit to Morocco of Israeli Prime Minister Peres and later exchanges of inconspicuous diplomatic missions which functioned as interest sections.

Q: Was Morocco part of the Non-Aligned Movement?

JACKSON: Morocco was represented at the founding Non-Aligned Summit in Belgrade in 1961 and has always remained a member of the Non-Aligned, but has never been a major actor in it, primarily because of strong Algerian influence in the Movement. By the time Algeria became Non-Aligned Chairman and hosted the Algiers Summit in 1973, it was also the head of OPEC and was able to mastermind a tripling or a quadrupling of world oil prices. Algerian influence was unparalleled in both the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned and was exerted to shore up support for the Polisario. Morocco could not compete and remained on the periphery of the Movement. The same thing later occurred in the

Organization of African Unity from which Morocco disassociated in 1983, although it has since come back in.

Q: Well, did the issue of Zionism equals racism come up during youtime there? I mean, were we making representations to the Moroccans?

JACKSON: Sure. That was one of the issues on which we would focus during the annual pre-UNGA dialogue with Morocco. Morocco had a relatively moderate voting record in the UN, but there were many issues, particularly dealing with the Middle East, on which they diverged from us.

Q: Then shall we move on to the next phase? You were what, ConsuGeneral in Casablanca.

JACKSON: Well, Ambassador Reed finished his tour in 1985 and was followed by Tom Nassif, a labor lawyer and businessman from California. I worked very well with him as Political Counselor for most of the first year he was there. I'd known him before in NEA, when he was the political DAS, and found that the Moroccan contacts I had already accumulated were useful and that he looked to me for help and advice as he was getting his feet on the ground. Tom's family were originally of Lebanese origin, making him the first Arab-American ambassador in Rabat, and I think the Moroccans valued that. He made good personal contacts, although different ones than his predecessor, which is always healthy. He was a sportsman and outdoor person, and I remember being part of several golf foursomes with the Minister of Interior, Driss Basri, and also boar hunting with Basri. Through those kinds of pursuits, he established very good ties.

In any case, I had not particularly planned to stay indefinitely in Morocco or much beyond my first tour, but the Consul General in Casablanca, Dan Phillips, was selected as ambassador to Burundi and Nassif asked me to take his place. The timing was good, and so I moved one hour down the road to Casablanca, the first time I had had a post of my own. Having been in Rabat, I was able virtually to have as much or as little to do

with the embassy as I wanted. I came back for weekly country team meetings and special events, but skipped the endless housing board meetings and other that go with embassy life. The consulate general, at that time, was one of the larger constituent posts with a number of regional offices. We were headquarters for the regional Marine Security Battalion, headed by a colonel with a couple captains and a supporting staff. There was also an Engineering Services Center, which covered southern Europe and the Middle East for technical security repairs and maintained a complex workshop for repairs on Delta barriers, safes, and all manner of security devices in the basement of the consulate. We also had the Regional Security Office, headed by Chris Disney, who went on to be a senior DS officer. It seems a surprising number in today's climate of austerity, but there was a total of 42 Americans and 27 FSNs in Casablanca, which for the first time in my career entailed genuine management experience.

Casablanca was and is the business center or New York City, if you will, of Morocco. Proportionately, however, the concentration of Moroccan industry and banking—70 percent or so—in the greater Casablanca area gave the city even greater weight in the national economy. The challenge was to penetrate a very sophisticated business and banking structure, to which the existence of consulates was basically peripheral. It was the kind of place that, if you stayed in the office, the phone would not ring off the hook. Once you got a foot in the door of the larger banks and insurance companies, for example, people spoke their minds and had opinions to a much greater extent than government officials in Rabat. There was also a degree of political interest, since Casablanca had experienced serious unrest in 1981 and been divided into six separate governorates, all reporting to the Ministry of Interior. There was a perception that, with four to five million of Morocco's then 25 million population, its struggle with urban and social problems would be predictive; as Casablanca went, so would go the Kingdom.

Casablanca was, nevertheless, also a post where you had to justify your continued existence in a period of cutting consulates around the world for presumed budgetary savings. Each bureau had to give up posts on a hit list and we were pitted in a head-to-

head contest, within NEA, against Alexandria, Egypt. It was plain that one post would be sacrificed to make the quota. So we were, naturally, busting to prove our worth. When the issue came up for decision, we were probably not harmed by the fact that Ed Djerejian, the NEA Assistant Secretary, had once made his name as the labor reporting officer in Casablanca at a time of labor unrest in the early 70s.

I feel very strongly that it is a tremendously short-sighted policy to close consulates and pocket the petty change. First, posts like Casablanca or Alexandria, now defunct, represent essential and unique windows on countries important to the United States. The reality you get in Casablanca or Alexandria is not that of Rabat or Cairo, cannot be covered from the capital city and is important to take into account. Second, such posts are training grounds for leadership in the Foreign Service. All too often today, people end up as DCMs or ambassadors having managed at most half a secretary, and it clearly shows. If one had the luxury to go back in time and interview General Marshall, let's say, on how he acquired his leadership skills, he would probably not point to a two-week course at Leavenworth, but instead to the progressive expansion of command responsibilities as he came up through the ranks. By insistence on short modules of leadership training and closure of remaining consulates, State is again missing the boat.

Q: Were you in Morocco at the time when we attacked Libya?

JACKSON: I was in Morocco, still in Rabat as political counselor. That would have been in the spring of 1986. I was, in fact, with my daughter on a week's trip in southern Spain. We heard the news and returned via Tangier with some trepidation about what to expect. Frankly, there was surprisingly little local reaction, and a number of Moroccans privately told me that it was too bad we had not polished off Qadhafi himself . If we were going to do it, why had we missed him, they asked. That does, in a way, answer your earlier questions about union with Libya and how deep it really was, because it was still in effect during that period.

Q: When you were in Rabat and Casablanca, what were you getting from your contacts about Algeria? I would think that there would be concern about Algeria.

JACKSON: There was, although there was an ebb and flow in Moroccan sentiment about Algeria. There was extreme suspicion, of course, on anything to do with the Western Sahara, but, on the other hand, this is not like India/Pakistan or Greece/Turkey, where you have centuries-old enmity, nor are there differences of religion or ethnicity. These are the same people of the same Sunni Muslim religion and the same Arab and Berber mixture. Much of their mutual misunderstanding came, in my view, from their diametrically different styles of government. On the Moroccan side, you had a very powerful monarch with total and immediate decision power, while in Algeria a vast and slow-moving bureaucracy with vestiges of the Soviet bureaucratic model. It was very hard for those establishments to communicate in a meaningful way. Whether the issue was establishing an agenda for a potential meeting or agreeing on logistics, the problems were legion. When things began to improve with the 1987-88 Hassan-Benjedid rapprochement, I was then in Casablanca and was surprised by the number of Moroccans who were eager to do business with Algeria and rushed over there to conclude deals and exploit a potential market opening. That hasn't gone forward as we all hoped because of the way Algeria has evolved and been immobilized, but over time I don't think the situation is hopeless.

Q: Was there a perceived problem of Islamiextremism—fundamentalism—in Morocco during the time you were there?

JACKSON: That was one of the questions that everybody would ask: How strong are the fundamentalists? Who is a fundamentalist? It's a loose term, and there are many different types of fundamentalists. There were a few outright, foreign-inspired agitators, most of whom had been identified and sentenced to death in absentia and were living outside the country. There was a second group of religiously-motivated Islamic fundamentalists that were in organizations like Justice and Charity who centered around figures like Sheikh Yassin in Sale. They were under close scrutiny and often subjected to penalties

for violations such as publishing newsletters without permission or holding gatherings without authorization, and a number were jailed—people like Sheikh Yassin— for two or three years at a time, or put under prolonged house arrest. There was also a larger body of younger people who were having trouble getting a foothold in society and were influenced by Western media, mostly TV coverage from Italy and Europe. They were bombarded with images of conspicuous consumption and Western material wealth without access to it or any prospect of getting it. In a country of 16 percent official unemployment, and unofficially maybe as high as 25 percent youth unemployment - including university graduates - dissatisfaction was rampant and for some the beard and the veil were a form of protest. This, of course, included protests against the United States as the model of consumerism that they wanted and couldn't aspire to. This is reflected differently, perhaps more positively, in the number of American tee shirts among the young or in the length of visa lines. At that time, the fundamentalists seemed to me not particularly strong or organized. They were there. They were agitators. When economic difficulties or unrest from other causes erupted, they surfaced to stir the pot. In fact, at the time of the Islamic Conference Summit I mentioned in Casablanca, all of the police force was there to provide security for heads of state and economic unrest boiled over elsewhere, particularly in the north in Tetouan and Oujda, although to some extent also in Marrakesh. Without police on hand, the army was called in to calm things down and reacted quite ruthlessly, with 25 or so deaths at that time. Some of the troublemakers were probably fundamentalists, and a typical profile might be someone who had worked in a Peugeot plant in France, picked up a more radical brand of Islam in the local mosque and, when the French cut back on foreign workers, returned to Tetouan. There with no auto plants to employ him, those skills weren't transferable, disaffection grew and only a spark like these protests over increased bread prices was needed.

Q: I thought this might be a good place to stop. Is there anything else we should cover on the Casablanca period, and next time we'll pick up when you returned as Deputy Chief of Mission.

JACKSON: If we have a minute, I'd like to say a couple of things about Casablanca. One of its fascinations was being the center of the Jewish community, as we have mentioned. They had a unique annual festival, called the Mamounia, where the houses of the Jewish community were open to all and people, Jews and some Muslims as well, would go from house to house celebrating. They also had in the countryside, a few hours from Casablanca, an annual pilgrimage that I attended for several years where Moroccan-origin Jews from around the world would come to feast and celebrate for two or three days at the shrine of Ait ba Ahmed. Casablanca was very interesting also as a melting pot of Arab and Berber business interests. Fez has always been the business center of Morocco until the last 30 or 40 years when the Fezzi Arab families moved their centers of business to Casablanca, but there is strong competition from Berbers from the Sousse area around Agadir. Rivalries in the business and banking sectors were interesting to watch, as were different and colorful traditions at weddings and the circumcisions.

From the Casablanca period, I would also like to mention involvement with the Casablanca-American School (CAS), which, at the time I arrived, was on the verge of bankruptcy, operating from two residences with under a hundred students. With the arrival of a dynamic new director, John Randolph, the school soon turned around. I was, for a time, President of the CAS Board, which included Moroccan businessmen, and we were able to get prime land in the upscale “California” suburb free from a real estate developer who calculated correctly that to build his development around a prestige school would increase the value of the homes. Then we raised about three million dollars through the business community, a large part of it from a benefit concert by Dizzy Gillespie which packed the largest Casablanca theater. Dizzy said it was the best concert he'd ever given in Africa, and it really did raise the roof, with some tickets to construct the school selling for as much as $1500 each. It shows you the wealth that existed in that community, although Morocco is sometimes described as having a population of 25 million with only a million consumers. In retrospect, the experience of being involved in building the CAS school which ended up as a state-of-the-art facility for 500 kids, now being further

expanded, was tangible, unlike much of the reporting that we do, and was a highlight of the Moroccan years. The level of teamwork in the committee - there was a farsighted Moroccan professor and businessman, Abdullah Alaoui, as Vice President and others like Abdelhaq Laraki and Abdelwahab Benkirane who were able to get things done in the Moroccan context and helped to establish linkages to the Palace - really made the new school possible and was a great satisfaction.

Q: Were there any problems with schools with religious purposes, because I'm familiar with problems, say in Saudi Arabia, where you couldn't send children of the country to the school. I mean, was it open to Moroccan children?

JACKSON: Morocco is an immensely tolerant country. Their brand of Sunni Islam of the Malachite rite is a most tolerant religion. Moroccans comprised 60 or 70 percent of the student body, and we had students of many other religions in that school - Christian, Jewish, Hindu, perhaps others - with no problems on that score at all.

Q: Your next post was as DCM in Rabat. You were there from when twhen?

JACKSON: I was DCM in Rabat from January 1989 until August of '91.

Q: Who was the ambassador then?

JACKSON: The Ambassador was Michael Ussery. Let me say, when I first went to Morocco in 1983, in my wildest dreams I had no thought of remaining eight years. Had I known that I would stay that long, I would have spent much more time on Arabic. But as it worked out, Mike Ussery, a political appointee, who had been a staffer in the Congress, worked in the Department in IO, and then as the political DAS in NEA, where he was responsible for North Africa, arrived at mid-year (I think a recess appointment) as our new ambassador. He was quite new to diplomatic life and living and working abroad and apparently wanted somebody with continuity in Morocco as his DCM. It was a time of considerable staff turnover, and I guess I fit that bill. It was certainly an agreeable move

one hour back up the road from Casablanca to Rabat. I was given the choice of a two or three year tour but felt that, from a career planning perspective, I had already overstayed and that two was probably sufficient.

Q: The French had been the former protective power, I guess, or whawas the official term?

JACKSON: Well, Morocco was a protectorate of France for most of this century, from 1912 or 1913 until Moroccan independence in 1956. On the other hand, it was a relatively benign colonial experience, at least compared to Algeria next door, which became not a colony but a province of metropolitan France. Every one in four inhabitants there was a Frenchman. In Morocco, the French, particularly in the initial years, chose to rule through indigenous structures. The governor responsible for putting those in place, Marshall Lyautey, was quite adept, unlike some of his successors, so the Moroccans retained a sense of their own culture and identity, unlike the Algerians. That isn't to say that in the period of Mohammed V's exile to Madagascar and return in 1953, there were not some fighting and ugly incidents leading up to Moroccan independence, but the special relationship with France survived independence. There was a very strong identification —love-hate, if you will—with France. King Hassan is a great admirer of French language and culture, and by and large the more educated Moroccans and professional people feel an affinity with the French and France. On the other hand, the feelings are ambivalent, and I recall, during international soccer matches in Morocco, extraordinary booing and animosity towards the French team, which was not expressed towards others. The French have a much trickier, more difficult time in their relationship with Morocco than we do. Certainly being a superpower also calls forth ambiguous feelings, but the French, with their particular history in North Africa and proximity, have more prickly issues to confront. I can remember one of the French ambassadors practically having to leave over issues of the interpretation of history in textbooks in use in the French schools in Morocco— those kinds of nitty-gritty issues. But the French also were everywhere and the linkages between France and Morocco made it difficult for us in a number of areas. Some of the Royal Councillors, for example Reda Guedira, now dead, were on the boards of dozens of

the largest French corporations. That made it very difficult to compete head to head with the French when it came to the major projects, whether it was a new airfield or access to prime coastal areas for tourist development. There was a feeling among many American businesses that you had to go through France to do business in Morocco. That, of course, wasn't true, and handicapped them further, but it was an uphill fight in which the French did not hesitate to call in their chips when the stakes were major contracts.

Q: Looking at this time, 1989-91, we're talking about the winding down of the Cold War. Did that have any implications in Morocco for us, or was this a European thing?

JACKSON: It had overriding, major implications for all of us, but to finish up on the French, their difficulties and tribulations tended to be bilateral and often of their own making. For example, in the Mitterand period, Mrs. Mitterand—Danielle—was very involved in human rights issues. Publicly, she appeared to side with the Polisario on issues such as Polisario prisoners held by Morocco. Her outspokenness was perceived by the Moroccans to be chastising and lecturing publicly, which did considerable harm to the Moroccan-French relationship in those years. It was restored later by Chirac, with whom the King had close relations over many years. In general, the Moroccans, and particularly the King, tend to be more comfortable with conservative Western governments. That's also true of us. I think they have had a predilection towards the Republicans, and certainly have a long memory for the human rights and other difficulties they had with us in the Carter era.

Q: What about the Gulf War that started in 1990 and ended in 1991?

JACKSON: The Gulf War dominated my second tour in Rabat, but I'd like first to answer your earlier question on the impact of the end of the Cold War. It was profound in the sense that Morocco, over the years, had maximized its strategic importance in the Cold War context as guardian of the southern approach to the Straits of Gibraltar. It was considered strategic real estate, and was aligned with the U.S. and the West in the Cold War vis # vis Soviet-backed Algeria. The King, very adeptly, played on Cold War themes

to maximize aid levels, which in my time in Morocco were at the level of combined military and economic assistance of about $140 million a year. With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, all assumptions of strategic importance were called into question, and with them aid levels plummeted. I think our assistance to Morocco now is below $20 million a year and falling. The value, as we said before, of a Voice of America mega-transmitter in Tangier built in the Cold War context, was in doubt and looked more and more like a white elephant. The Moroccans were also deeply concerned that the focus on reconstruction and development in Eastern Europe would preempt them in the competition for U.S. resources. So the redefinition of the world order was very critical, I would say, to Morocco.

Q: Did you find as DCM and being with the Ambassador, were there any sort of philosophical or substantive talks with the Moroccan officials about what this all meant? It was all new to everyone. I mean we were all having to readjust. Was this a subject?

JACKSON: There were talks, but Morocco remained a very centralized state with tremendous power and authority vested in the King. In those years, the King, having survived traumatic attempts on his life in the late 1970s, and the departure through death or illness of his most stalwart confidantes over the years - his uncle, General Moulay Hafid, his brother, Abdullah, and others - was not the outgoing, accessible figure that he had been to the diplomatic corps in earlier years. Most ambassadors in Rabat saw the King when they presented credentials and when they took their leave. The U.S. was, of course, an exception, and there were others, but it was not a regular dialogue. The King was a strategic thinker and loved to discuss broad strategy, so that when we had visitors of such a bent - Jeane Kirkpatrick comes to mind as somebody whom he enjoyed talking with - we took advantage of the opportunity for broad discussion. Discussion of such issues at the Foreign Ministry level, however, was usually less productive because the vision was in the palace, I would say.

Q: I was wondering whether you ran across the American practical way of thinking versus the French, I'm not sure I'm using this correctly, the Cartesian way. There are wheels within wheels and there is a plan for everything. There is a reason for everything, whereas we don't think that way. I was wondering whether this ever showed up in your experience in Morocco in the embassy dealings with Moroccans.

JACKSON: Morocco is a multi-faceted, complex country. The French overlay is very strong, but there are many other facets as well. In some areas of Morocco, French is not spoken, and the inhabitants are very much Arab, or Berber, in their identity. So it's a unique culture in its own right, of which the French is only a superficial overlay. Many Moroccans will tell you privately that they feel they have the worst of French bureaucracy. In fact, we had cases of, for example, environmental laws inherited from the French still on the books in Morocco after they had been jettisoned in France 20 years before. Archaic regulations, high unemployment, and bloated bureaucracy conspired against change. The embassy was in no way trying to compete with the French in Morocco and considered our efforts complementary, for example, in the development area, but the French were and remain sensitive to U.S. presence in what they regard as their backyard, or chasse-garde, as it's sometimes called.

Q: A term that comes up all the time.

JACKSON: Right. In any case, it was very interesting to me to return to Rabat from Casablanca, to get a sense of the relative weight in that society of private sector versus government. Foreign Ministry directors, for example, often had more successful relatives in the business capital, and I found that a word from or just friendship with the latter would cut a lot of ice. The private sector, at least in the upper reaches of Casablanca, seemed to have a higher standing in Morocco than government.

Q: Let's go into the Gulf War. You might explain first for somebody who might be reading this sometime down the road, what we meant when we talk about the Gulf War.

JACKSON: By the time that came up, I had been in Rabat for about a year as DCM. I had come back and taken the DCM course in Washington and had listened carefully to the kind of conventional guidance that they give. That is, as DCM, you're there to make the trains run on time and do the inside job, and the ambassador is the outside man. I attempted to follow that, but as I got to know and came to work closely with Mike Ussery and gain his confidence in me, I found that there were aspects of the outside job he was very comfortable with me taking on. I frequently did some of the traveling and meeting with governors in the provinces and prolonged ceremonial sessions with Moroccans, at his request. We had a wonderful partnership, thanks to his encouragement and urging me to expand and take on contacts. So, I had taken the measure of the job by the time of the Gulf War, which exposed some very important cleavages in Moroccan society. During the six months build-up to the Gulf War, before Desert Shield and Desert Storm, there was a good deal of turbulence in Morocco. There were, for the first time, marches, in which fundamentalist groups dared to show themselves by marching publicly. The first one, which I recall, was on the main street in Rabat outside the Parliament, in which four or five hundred fundamentalists marched with placards. That sent shockwaves through a society already troubled by the specter of radical Islam in neighboring Algeria. In the buildup to hostilities in the Gulf, in December of 1990, there was also a demonstration in Fez during which a five-star hotel, the Hotel Merinid, was burnt to the ground by fundamentalist protestors. So this was a time of turbulence that needed close watching.

One amusing episode occurred after the Iraqis went into Kuwait. The ambassador was away, and I was temporarily charge. I got a call one evening about six o'clock from the Palace asking if it was true that Defense Secretary Cheney and General Schwarzkopf were coming to Morocco. It was the first I'd heard of it, and I was dubious. Naturally, I called the State Department Operations Center and they told me, in effect, “Go back to sleep.” A few minutes later, say about 6:30, I got a call from Richard Haas at the White House, who told me not only were Cheney and Schwarzkopf coming, but they would be landing in half an hour, at seven o'clock, not in Rabat but at a military field near Kenitra,

normally a 45 minute drive away. I was to have cars and be organized and assist in their visit. We drove there at 80 miles an hour and arrived just as the plane was landing. It was as smooth a visit as one could have had.

Q: Could this have been set up unknown to you? I mean, was the Kininvolved in this?

JACKSON: Nobody was involved. Cheney and Schwarzkopf had been elsewhere in the Gulf, had concluded a visit in Egypt, and were on their plane flying back to the States. President Bush got the idea that it would also be well to consult with Hassan and phoned their plane to ask that they put down in Rabat. They were practically by then flying over Morocco. We went right to the Palace, and they had an important conversation in terms of Moroccan cooperation in the Gulf War. Morocco, as you know, was one of the few Arab countries, along with Egypt, to send troops. They had a significant military contingent which, at the Saudi request, guarded one of the key oil facilities. So, we had an evening meeting. Secretary Cheney and the General came back to the embassy to use the secure phone. They reported to the President and took off probably around one in the morning.

Q: Who were they meeting with?

JACKSON: They met only with King Hassan. We set up the meeting aftethey were on the ground. The King was immensely hospitable.

Q: Trying to get this in time perspective. It was August 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait. This was before Moroccan troops went to Saudi Arabia.

JACKSON: Yes.

Q: So this was preliminary to bringing them on board.

JACKSON: Yes. That's what it was about. The Moroccans, of course, made the important distinction vis # vis their public opinion that they were not part of Desert Storm, but were in the Gulf at the request of the Saudis to guard a refinery. There was very strong support in

the street for Saddam Hussein throughout the region, although not as turbulent in Morocco as next door in Tunis, where there was more violent reaction. Things were largely peaceful in Morocco, which was a point of some controversy for us in the embassy as the timetable moved towards Desert Storm and Shield in January of 1991. People in Washington were clearly under pressure to cover themselves and show that they were protecting staff and evacuating dependents from the Middle East. On the other hand, it was very politically sensitive to evacuate from places like Israel or Saudi Arabia where people might actually get a SCUD missile on their heads. So, in order to make a quota for evacuees, it was decided to pull staff from the Maghreb. We began steps toward a voluntary departure. On the other hand, while there had been that episode in Fez, the burning of the hotel, there had been no further violence in Morocco. Moroccan contacts were continuing as normal. People in the embassy were relaxed, were playing golf with their Moroccan contacts, schools were functioning normally, and no one chose to depart on a voluntary basis.
So, in the event, we got a mandatory evacuation order. Tunis and possibly Algiers had already carried out voluntary departures because they had more threatening situations and people chose to leave. It appeared from the record, therefore, that Morocco, the only North African country with a mandatory evacuation, faced a more menacing situation than neighbors in the Maghreb. In any case, that was an experience to work that through. I think we were given only two or three days to effect the mandatory evacuation of about 600 Americans. As events unfolded, our judgment proved to be entirely correct, and the evacuation was unneeded and wasteful. That's something that has lasting, human impact when a large embassy community is suddenly evacuated on a mandatory basis. American schools, in the middle of their school year, for example, had very serious difficulties.
The Casablanca school, that I was particularly close to, kept its doors open and had no problems, but it was tough because some of the teachers did leave, following our example. All dependents were evacuated and most went back to the States. My family was in Finland, since my wife is of Finnish origin. Even though the situation was dead calm, it took some four months to get Washington's permission to bring them back. The then-Under Secretary for Management, Ivan Selin, used the return of dependents as leverage

to bargain for further reductions in the embassy ceiling with a bottom line that dependents could come back but only with a 10% reduction in the personnel ceiling. We had already been through a series of those reduction exercises. Anyway, it was a turbulent period, and after such a long evacuation, it was a management challenge to knit back together what had been a very close-knit community.

Q: This decision was made in Washington?

JACKSON: It was a Washington decision that we opposed to the extent we were able to, although the people making it, like Selin, had probably never served abroad and seemed to have little grasp of the human and practical dimensions.

Q: I've heard in some countries, as in the United States, people were sort of glued to the TV sets, kind of watching the war on TV. Did it play that way in Morocco, too? The war was January through March.

JACKSON: Well, it did, Stu. We were not given from Washington the exact starting time. Of course, from the urgency of carrying out the evacuation on such short notice, we knew that it was imminent. I remember being at home in the middle of the night and getting a call from the Canadian ambassador, who had received word of the starting gun from Ottawa. Then, as you say, it was all in the papers. Everybody was watching it, mesmerized. Once it started, the situation in Morocco remained calm, but up to that point, local reaction was basically an unknown. We had never been involved in a major war in the Middle East against an Arab enemy, and it was unpredictable. The Moroccans, as I said, were immensely cooperative on all matters of security at that time. I went to the Interior Ministry and worked out with them that we were issued for all of our people normal license plates, because the diplomatic plates had a 17, which meant U.S. Mission and stood out. There was a single main road to the suburbs in which most embassy families lived and, in a hostile situation, that could, of course, have become a shooting gallery, but nothing untoward of that kind occurred.

Q: I would have thought that in the Arab world, there would have been a bit of ambivalence for many during the Gulf War, which only lasted two months, I think—both the air and the ground action was an overwhelming defeat of this Arab army. Although the Moroccans had troops on the winning side, I would have thought that this would have in a way hurt Arab pride to see what was considered the mightiest of the Arab armies brought down to its knees within a very short time. I mean, I would have thought it would have been ambiguous.

JACKSON: Ambiguous is the way it was. There was great pride, particularly at the popular level, about this macho Saddam standing up to the United States, the only superpower. But the Moroccans also were well aware of who Saddam was and what Iraq was at that time. The Iraqis were very blatant, even in Morocco, in their behavior. In that six-month build-up, there was one person at the Iraqi embassy, my counterpart, the DCM, who was open—maybe this was just before Iraq's invasion—but he had been quite open and privately questioned where Iraq was going. I remember some long discussions with him. Unlike any of the others, he was open-minded, a person you could talk to. He had good contacts also in Morocco. The Iraqis sent a hit team out from Baghdad, took him down to the Plage des Nations, a beach outside Rabat, tortured him and then murdered him, dumping his body and the weapon - a kind of a signature calibre the Iraqis use - for all to see and fear their brutal methods. He had a young family, kids, a wife that we all knew. Things like that did not endear Iraq to the Moroccans or anybody else.

Q: Was there any concern about Iraqi hit squads going after the Ambassador at that time?

JACKSON: Well, of course, we were on security alert. We had very good, augmented security cooperation from Morocco. Even in normal times, the Palace has always made available a special detail to the American ambassador. I think we felt quite secure and well taken care of. It is the case, however (and one thinks of this in light of recent tragedies in Kenya and Tanzania), that we did not have Inman standards or Inman setbacks. The

Ambassador's residence was very close to the street, but given the physical environment we were in, we felt as secure as we could be at that time.

Q: What about relations from the embassy point of view with Israeand the Peres visit and when did this take place?

JACKSON: The Peres visit was in 1986, in the summer. I was then in Casablanca. I think, as we said earlier, this was the “straw that broke the camel's back” in Morocco's union accord with Libya. There was a great deal of hope about the direction Morocco was moving in with Israel, symbolized by that visit. Morocco has always had quiet ties with Israel and, as you know, helped to set up the arrangements that made Camp David possible. Subsequently, when Peres lost the election and a Likud government came in, things clearly slowed down.

I know, Stu, you are very interested in the consular area and would like to say that one of the interesting challenges I faced as DCM was consular management. We were a large embassy community in Morocco, for the most part delighted with the advantages of that country - that you could go to the beach or up in the mountains and ski in a hospitable environment for families - with an abundance of outdoor things to do. But the consuls, typically, because of the pressures on them for visas and the degree of visa fraud and high refusal rate, perceived the country in very different terms. The reality for them was that they often just couldn't go for the week-end to Marrakesh or Essaouira, or any of the wonderful places, because there would be people who had been turned down or had family turned down for visas and would besiege them. It was therefore a constant effort to make sure that their attitudes didn't become too negative. I remember one who was so close to the frustrations of his work, that I think if the Crown Prince of Morocco had come in for a visa, he would have grilled him against the wall and refused. (Laughter) It was always also a last minute thing when members of the royal family would decide to travel to the United States, and there would be a rush of emergency Palace visa requests at eleven o'clock at night for a departure the next morning.

There were other preoccupations that you would have in any embassy of that kind. We had a very active housing board and lots of tensions among the agencies stemming from different standards that some agencies have. Some would make available air conditioning for residences; others not. Housing was very important because, as Western as Morocco is as an environment, there are still many things that some people found lacking - for example, access to English-speaking cinemas, things of that kind. Morale tended to be highest among families, particularly those with young children, where they could get help in running the household and the gardens were safe for children, and probably lowest in the single community. Single women, particularly, sometimes found itdifficult when they visited places like the Marrakesh medina and were hassled by young males. People who lived alone did not find the cohesiveness that you have in a more hardship-oriented embassy, nor the advantages at your disposal in a European embassy. It was neither one, nor the other.

Q: Back to the consular side. Were there still problems with Hashisand that sort of thing?

JACKSON: Morocco is a major marijuana and hashish producing country, particularly in the Rif Mountains behind Tangier. Most of that, however, is destined for Europe, and by far the largest number of people who are picked up, jailed and sentenced to long prison terms, are Europeans. It's a very difficult game. It's frequently the case that the local vendor of marijuana or hashish will finger his client to the police and collect a reward. We did have periodic Americans who were arrested and jailed. Generally, after a few years, they were quietly released. It was a problem, but not a major one.

Q: Were there any other issues that involved the embassy during youDCM period?

JACKSON: The DCM job is one of constant short-fuse crises, and there were new issues. Clearly, the watershed was the Gulf War, which changed the alignments in all of that part of the world. We continued to have a reasonable visitor flow. I remember in the last days, as I left Morocco in August of 1991 or perhaps the last days of July, Secretary Baker

arrived for a visit and consultation with the King. I was his control officer, which I enjoyed, but it added to the pressure of getting out of the post. If you've been in a country for eight years, particularly a country like that, you make many close friends and people kill you with hospitality when you leave. At the conclusion of the visit, I think the King wanted to make a gesture Baker would appreciate by recognizing the embassy. After their meeting, he asked the Secretary if he would object if he decorated me with the Order of Commander of the Alaouite Throne, which he then did on national television. Mr. Baker, who I hadn't previously known, was somewhat surprised, but couldn't say no, and I was allowed to keep the decoration, which I still wear on Moroccan occasions with a great deal of pride.

I think, Stu, as we leave this period, I'd note that, in the years I was in Morocco, a shift occurred in our thinking about it. In the earlier years, there was a perception in Washington that, vis # vis Algeria, Morocco was a country with its revolution still ahead of it, some people even equated it to Iran. I think they largely underestimated the sense of history, tradition, and stability in Morocco. That isn't to say that its future is clear, but, as things have worked out in Algeria, I think they probably had it quite wrong. Morocco has more or less been on its own for centuries. It did not suffer the Turkish occupation that others in the region did. I think there is a sense among Moroccans of who they are that is rare in that part of the world. I think that our relationship with Morocco, a friendly one in which we often extol our bicentennial ties, is a little bit threadbare. Listening to the toasts, which draw on the same shopworn cliches when we have high reciprocal visits or when the King was here about a year ago, leads me to conclude that it needs reinvigoration and working at. I think we need to be doing more than smugly saying that the private sector will take over as official assistance and involvement tapers off. While there are opportunities for investment in Morocco, it is not obvious that U.S. investment will fill the gap. It used to be the case that a new investor, to start up in Morocco, would require 56 different documents from 13 different ministries. It's better now, but there are still significant barriers.

Morocco traditionally was an agricultural country. It shifted, and for the last 10 years or so, has been more than 50 percent urban in its population distribution. Yet it is in many

ways still agricultural in its thinking and make-up, so that the popular sense of well-being and adjustment is still very closely related to harvest and rainfall. In a country of cyclical drought every six or seven years, it was my observation that there is also a cyclical welling up of criticism and political discontent which corresponds to rainfall. This is hard to put into perspective in a diplomatic service like ours, where people serve for only two or three years in a country. Suppose you're there as a new political officer, eager to make your mark and you're beginning to pick up for the first time in your short experience these echos of discontent, there is a temptation to report that the sky is falling. We tend to do this every few years, and yet Morocco has a rather long history of this cyclical pattern and then things, as often as not, come back together as they were before.

Q: Before we leave here, during this time you were DCM, how abouAlgeria? Were events there reverberating in Morocco?

JACKSON: For most of my eight years, there was a hot war in the Western Sahara with periodic Polisario attacks and retaliation by Morocco. There was a pattern of restraint on the Moroccan side in not hitting the Polisario camps inside Algeria in the Tindouf area. It was always said that the King was under pressure from his Army and from the nationalists of the Istiqlal Party to hit at those camps and that it was his moderation and leadership that prevented it. That may or may not be the case, but was a general perception. Things began to improve as the Algerian political situation and economy spiraled out of control in the late 1980s. The King and Chedli Benjedid held several meetings, which led to understandings that created the Umma, the grouping of Maghreb States, and that, more importantly, by late 1991 - after I'd left Morocco - permitted a cease-fire in the Sahara and establishment there of a UN force (MINURSO). That was set up, as you know, with an 18-month mandate to culminate in a referendum which now, in late 1998, is still to come. The cease-fire has, however, held since 1991, and that - though the UN Mission has been constantly criticized - is a major accomplishment.

Q: Dick, when you came back, how did you feel about going to FSI adean of the School of Area Studies?

JACKSON: Well, frankly Stu, I was spoiled, having been in Morocco for eight years. I hoped to stay abroad. I had been in touch with the embassy in Paris about the DCM vacancy there, but lost out, not surprisingly, to Avis Bohlen, who was obviously far better qualified than I in things French. So, when the Area Studies deanship came up at FSI, that seemed like a good fit, late as it was in the bidding cycle.

Q: What was the period you were doing the Deanship at the FSI? Frowhen to when?

JACKSON: I was Dean of the Area Studies School from '91 until '95. Four years. I would not normally have stayed that long, but it coincided with the shift from the old high-rise FSI in Rosslyn to the new 72-acre campus in Arlington at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center.

Q: In 1991, what was the extent of Area Studies and what did it cover?

JACKSON: Well, in 1991 we were operating in that high-rise building in Rosslyn which was never built as a schoolhouse. It was the opposite of an educational environment. Its vertical organization meant that different sections had no linkages and that there was no particular sharing among schools. It was a good collegial group of people. Brandon Grove was then the Director of FSI, a very nice gentleman to work with. We had a very congenial group of deans - in the Language School, Mark Lissfelt; Vlad Lehovich in Professional Studies; and we had a lot of fun and accomplished a lot together. The Area Studies basically processed some 2,000 students a year in two different ways. There were five or six sessions a year of two-weeks, called the intensive regional seminars, and then there were longer term, once-a-week Area Studies classes by country, which were associated with each of the 80 or so languages that were then taught at FSI.

Q: You talk about the atmosphere at the FSI. What about the atmosphere with the Department of State from your perspective? You'd been away from the FSI for a long time and had your training here, too, like most of us. How responsive was the rest of the State Department to bringing its people in and updating them on what was happening in individual countries or regions?

JACKSON: Well, I have to say that's a much broader question, Stu, of the linkage between training assignments and promotion. I think that the State Department has never gotten that quite right, at least has never gotten it as right as the military, which puts a much greater premium on training and values to a greater extent, I'd have to say, its human resources. In the first period I was at FSI, I think Brandon Grove had a difficult road to hoe with Ivan Selin, the then-Under Secretary of Management, who we mentioned earlier in the context of mandatory evacuation from Morocco. He was not particularly supportive, as far as I could see, of training. I think, parenthetically, we are one of the few major diplomatic training institutions that put training on the organization chart under the management section, rather than putting it, as the Canadians do, under the Deputy Secretary or at least some part of the Department where there's a substantive input into what people should really learn in order to be effective diplomats. But be that as it may, I think Larry Taylor, who succeeded Brandon Grove and whose arrival coincided with relocation to the new campus, was able, with a new Under Secretary and a new Director General, to create a closer nexus between training, on the one hand, and assignments and promotion on the other, although that is always an uphill fight. The new campus, which is why I did stay on for two more years, was a breath of fresh air. It held great promise for pushing the envelope and expanding what we were doing in training.

Q: Were there any particular difficulties with Area Studieessentially such as getting the right people to talk to classes?

JACKSON: Well, we brought in lecturers from a number of sectors—government, academia, and the private sector. We did some new things that I thought were exciting in

those years. We had the gaming and roundtable operation of Fred Hill, which was later separated from Area Studies. I observed one day during a game on Cuba that some of the professors were speaking Spanish among themselves and got the idea of having games for advanced language students in the languages they were studying. That clicked and has since become a regular feature at FSI with games each year in Arabic, Russian, and Chinese, as well as major Western languages. It is a wonderful learning vehicle for students to get out of the artificiality of the language classroom and mix it up in a simulated real-world or negotiating context. For example, the scenario of a game in Arabic might be negotiation of base access rights with one of the Gulf countries. We also piloted in those years an outreach to the business community. I strongly believe that if we're serious about understanding the business perspective, live businessmen add an important dimension to the classroom. So I was able to get permission to bring in as students people like the Regional Middle East Director of Southwestern Bell or a manager who was establishing a facility for the Newport Shipping Company in the Persian Gulf. They both contributed to their classes and found that we had a unique product which the private sector would value. If the administration is ever sufficiently serious to get Congressional authority to collect fees, like the Coast Guard does for maps or the Consular Service for visas and passports, there would be a potential market which would help to make FSI more self sufficient, I think.

Q: Did you find you had any political difficulties with some of the people who came in and talked on courses? You dealt with Greece which is politically sensitive, and, of course, sensitive is anything dealing with Israel. But, you know, there are other ones. The academics tend not to be as circumspect about describing situations sometimes as people who have to deal with the policy issues. Did this cause any problems?

JACKSON: Well, that I think, went with the territory. I liked to recruit Congressional aides among the students and urged them to come whenever we had particularly interesting sessions. There were some sensitivities, but we had no major flaps in that area that I recall. In fact, I worked out with the Northern Virginia Television News Channel to cover

some of the non-controversial classes and presentations that we had. I firmly believe much FSI training could be made public in the form of television, that people should have a chance to see the kind of training we're doing at this campus and that we could, in so doing, develop a much stronger local constituency, but I did notice some jitters on the part of Public Affairs Bureau at that time who felt that even though they were mostly private lecturers, the fact that they were speaking in a government facility could imply U.S. government endorsement of their views. I think that's overly protective, personally.

The Area Studies faculty was a very interesting mixture of people; a new kind of management challenge. We had a very dedicated staff with Doris Faber, who's now here in ADST, and Marylou Bothwell, and my Deputy, John Collier. But we had a corps of long-term academics; very serious scholars, like Kendall Myers, Peter Bechtold, Gene Bruns, Anne Imamura, and many others. We supplemented them with FSOs to bring a field or professional perspective to the curriculum—people like Roman Popadiuk, who taught the Ukraine course, and Lannon Walker, who I convinced to head the Africa section. He brought a lot of energy and dynamism to that. So it was a good mixture, and I enjoyed it thoroughly. I think I was the first dean to take on a full teaching role. I taught, for those four years, all of the courses on North Africa, which I found one of the most rewarding aspects of the job. I very much believe that the administration of FSI should spend time in the classroom, should establish personal relationships with the students and get a firsthand feel for their needs and attitudes. They are the clients and this is a school. This should not be just another government bureaucracy where students are considered peripheral, if not intrusive. I think the emphasis has got to be in the classroom and in the quality of the instruction offered. The place for top FSI administrators is as much there as gaining face time at interminable Department meetings and task forces.

Q: You mentioned attitudes of the students. I talked to people, not only here at FSI, but at Georgetown and other places. They have difficulty getting the student to read. How did

you find the student in the early 1990's? Were they a different breed of cat than you are used to? What were their strengths and weaknesses?

JACKSON: No, I would have to take issue with that. I found that the students were immensely eager to learn, motivated, and pushing me in the classes I had for additional materials. That was true, not just of officers, but particularly of secretaries who were coming into those courses in larger numbers, maybe for the first time, and were very determined to take advantage of it. I can remember secretaries in my classes going to places like Mauritania who were writing papers for me and really digging into the subjects that we were giving them. I always tried to give the students projects that were related to their next assignments and to somehow get their embassy or even prospective ambassador excited about the research they were doing, so they could arrive at their new post and deliver something of value. That proved to be a motivating tactic that worked in many cases.

Q: What was the interconnect between the desks and students? Wathere much of one?

JACKSON: Definitely. I think that was one of the benefits of having a mix of academics and FSOs on the staff. The FSOs did bring something in terms of knowing the Department and having an easier relationship with the bureaus and desks, so we often worked out that the students would undertake some work on the desk, and there would be an easy back and forth. I also got the different regional chairs to go to the bureau weekly staff meetings and to talk there about what was going on in the courses and maybe get some of those people to come over for particular lectures. Somebody like Lannon Walker had such broad African contacts that we were getting in world-class speakers like Wole Soyinka of Nigeria, and we frequently had overflow crowds when people heard about that. We would advertise in the Department as a way of building bridges. It was an exciting time, and to build this kind of a campus and get land from Congress, as George Shultz did at that time, would be virtually unthinkable today. This campus is a great resource, and I think that Larry Taylor

was a particularly good salesman for FSI in those first years at the new campus. He clearly saw that the envelope needed to be pushed outwards.

I think there is also a very important potential for “training diplomacy,” if you're the world's remaining superpower. Countries around the globe look to us for the lead in diplomatic training. They want to come here, they want to see it, they want to know how we're training. It's very important to play in that game, in my view. I remember once Larry could not get to the annual meeting of Diplomatic Academies that was then held at the Mateos Romero Institute in Mexico City, and asked me to substitute for him. I gave a presentation about FSI and was struck by the attention that the U.S. commanded among foreign diplomatic academies and how they listened to and questioned everything that you said. In fact, in those years we were training certain other countries' diplomats. Micronesia and the states of the former Soviet Union regularly sent groups under an AID program, and I'm sorry those programs have now lapsed. I thought the knowledge, contacts and good will that they engendered were immensely valuable. Overall, I'm somewhat disappointed that subsequent FSI regimes have not seemed to me to push the envelope on what this place could be and have instead retrenched. In the early years of the National Foreign Affairs Training Center (NFATC), there was a feeling that it could evolve into a West Point of the Foreign Service, a repository of values and traditions, similar to what ADST is trying to do with the Oral History Program, but that has not materialized.

Q: I agree with you that I think we've lost some opportunities. I mean there were some very promising starts. Was it money, lack of foreign outlook, what was it that caused FSI at this period to move back to being what it was, sort of a basic language specialty trainer?

JACKSON: I can't speak to those causes because they were really after I left. It was broadening and expanding when I was here because of the synergy of the management team and Larry Taylor's personal, strong leadership and the ties that he forged with the 7th Floor. I have the feeling since that the buzzwords are much more vocational training and that there is a suspicion on the campus of anything that seems overly academic or

intellectual. In other words, it's a trade school approach. Personally, I think that's too bad. I think the Foreign Service Institute should be much more closely linked with the National Defense University. I think it should be a place of ferment and ideas. I think the average visitor today to this beautiful campus is struck by its potential and beauty, but also by its almost eerie lack of people, students, activity, and ferment. I think also that the taxpayer would be very well served to fold into FSI other branches of the State Department that are clearly redundant, like the Historian's Office and the external research branch of INR, many of whose people are already regular lecturers on this campus and whose functions are very largely complementary with those at FSI.

Q: Why don't we move on. In '95, you went where?

JACKSON: In 1995, I went into a mainstream Department job. I had hoped to go abroad after four years, and had been on a few COM lists that hadn't clicked.

Q: COM—Chief of Mission.

JACKSON: Based on my previous Moroccan and Libyan service, NEA asked me to be Director for Maghreb Affairs. Being interested in North Africa, I accepted. By the time I got there, they had taken the decision to merge Egyptian and Maghreb Affairs into a new office, to be known as Egyptian/North African Affairs—ENA. That was basically a budgetary and management decision. They wanted to offer up such a merger to be ahead of the budget cutters in the Department, so it was important to the Bureau that this work. It involved a cut of four positions, so it meant fairly intense work and reorganization with fewer people. That was initially a tough proposition because it took about six months to complete the physical enlargement and reconfiguration necessary, so that we operated for at least six months from two offices and, for a period during the construction, three offices, with some of the staff down in the Department basement near the barber shop. It also coincided with the period of government shut-downs, so it was somewhat turbulent.

Q: You were dealing with this Egyptian/North African operation frowhen to when?

JACKSON: I was Director from summer 1995 until August 1997—two years.

Q: Maybe we better take it country by country because each one was sort of marching to a different tune. Let's move west to east. What about Morocco during that time?

JACKSON: Well, rather than just go at first country by country, the challenge I think of making this new office work was somehow to balance the massive rhythms of the U.S./ Egyptian relationship with its $2.1 billion in annual assistance and continual congressional complexities of every kind against the much quicker deadlines and crises of North Africa. That is to say, the issues of Libyan sanctions and the immediate reaction whenever Qadhafi or Mubarak violated the flight restrictions on flying in and out of Libya, the continual crises of a bloody civil war in Algeria, and Track Two negotiations that we were deeply involved in on the Western Sahara that were eventually folded into former Secretary Baker's initiative. So it was a question of balancing those two things to assure that the Egyptian portfolio got the right amount of attention and that, with a North African background, I did not spend too much time on the Maghreb. The Egyptian workload was, to some extent in those years, predicated on the Gore/Mubarak initiative which involved fixed meetings every six months reciprocally in Cairo and Washington of President Mubarak and Vice President Gore to review a whole range of economic and reform goals.

Q: What about, let's start with Morocco, during that period? Ansignificant developments then?

JACKSON: Well, we've talked a good deal about Morocco, Stu, in the earlier segment when I was in Morocco for eight years. It was a time of intense back and forth with Morocco as a result of having a very activist business-oriented, political ambassador, Marc Ginsberg, in Rabat, with whom I worked very closely in connection with a secret negotiating initiative to probe whether the climate was right to try to bring the Western

Sahara parties to the table. It took a year or so of fairly intense diplomacy and regular visits out there to determine that it was not. I was fortunate to accompany Bob Pelletreau on several trips to North Africa.

Q: He was the Assistant Secretary.

JACKSON: Bob was the Assistant Secretary at that time and, of course, a very experienced Middle Eastern hand with long North African experience and a particular fondness for the area. We went out and met with the new President of Algeria, President Liamine Zeroual, and had a full exchange of views with him, the first meeting at that level with Algeria for at least a decade.

Q: At that time, the Algerians were getting pretty well caught up in their own civil war and the Polisario no longer were given the same priority. This might have been an opportunity to bring the Moroccans and Polisario along with their supporters, the Algerians, in some sort of agreement. Was that part of our thinking?

JACKSON: Well, the thinking was to start a process. In doing that, we shuttled back and forth. We had regular contacts with the Polisario in Tindouf. We, at one point, got from them, for the first time, a written document of what a settlement might look like from their point of view. It was pretty sketchy. We shuttled back and forth with that. In the end, the conditions just were not there at that time. This, of course, was all against a backdrop of increasing congressional frustration with the United Nations and with our 25 percent budget support of the United Nations which focused attention on peacekeeping operations such as MINURSO, the operation in the Western Sahara that had extended well beyond its mandate. It was set up, as you know, in 1991, with an 18-month mandate to move to a referendum and, by this time, we were in the 1995-97 period, and there was no referendum in sight. The Congress was increasingly restive that we were putting money down a rathole, so it was against the prospect of a withdrawal of the military peacekeepers and presumed resumption of hostilities that would follow that we were attempting to broker

a resumption of talks. In the end, it evolved into a further UN- sponsored effort under Secretary Baker, as the UN/Western Sahara emissary, which was probably not a bad outcome for a basically intractable problem. There have not been hostilities down there since 1991. To my mind, the relatively limited cost of that UN operation has been money well spent, although a number of senators do not see it that way.

Q: What about Algeria? What was the situation arrived in 1995 anduring the time you were there? What did you see happening in Algeria?

JACKSON: Well, there was great concern, of course, about Algeria, for its own sake and as a point of difference in our important relationship with the French. There was much public discussion U.S.-French differences over Algeria just as I was getting to the desk. We tried to smooth these over and develop a dialogue with the French on Algeria. The important thing was, however, the political process that began in Algeria at that time leading to elections in 1996 and the more constructive things that President Zeroual (who just a few weeks ago announced he was not going to serve out his term and will withdraw after elections next year) was saying about pluralism and respect for democracy. Following Zeroual's election, Bob Pelletreau went out to start a dialogue and discuss limited steps that the United States might take as Algeria moved forward, if they did, in the directions that they said they would. That isn't to say we didn't have a lot of problems with Algeria during this period. We had an Algerian dissident in the United States who became a protracted high-profile asylum case and many other things going on. Of course, the U.S. has a major oil and gas stake in Algeria with all the big companies - Anadarko and Bechtel, for example - falling over themselves to get contracts in Algeria. It was a very interesting portfolio and a fascinating time.

Q: What was their analysis of motivations behind the Civil War?

JACKSON: Well, that's a big question, Stu. Algeria has a cumulative history. I think it's a history of mismanagement from independence on which they largely got away with

because of high revenues from gas and oil. When those diminished in the late 1980s, there was pressure on the system which could no longer deliver. There was a period of democratic opening, and then the military stepped in to prevent the elections when it became apparent the fundamentalists would win. That created a residue of politicization and bitterness, and cleavages in Algeria went in many directions, and still do, from settling scores to defending business monopolies. Violence comes from all sides and it's not infrequent to find families that have lost sons on both sides; one son, for example, a fundamentalist and another a policeman.

Q: Were we concerned that this conflict that had religious roots might cease to be just an Algerian problem and become a more general Islamic problem?

JACKSON: That's been the great “green peril” debate in Washington that's gone on for some years. Yes, Algeria was at the crux of that debate in those years. You had many who saw Algeria as the wave of the future and radical Islam as the new ideology, replacing communism, against which we would rally. Nor were these sentiments restricted to think tanks here. Neighboring North African and other Arab countries, who saw aid levels declining and our attention focused on Eastern Europe and former states of the Soviet Union, were quick to point out the dangers of radical Islam and that they needed assistance to be an effective bulwark against it. So, there was a lot of rhetoric at that time, although that of the Europeans was that you need to look at countries on a case- by-case basis in relation to unique historic circumstances and that Islam was not a monolithic, threatening force. The President reiterated that recently, although in the context of our misguided bombings in Sudan and Afghanistan.

Q: Did we see in Algeria the hand of either Libya or Iran?

JACKSON: People who would have you believe that there is a monolithic Islamic menace were quick to search for evidence of outside support. I think, in the case of Libya, no; Iran,

yes, there was some support, probably via Sudan, although the evidence I saw was not determinative.

Q: Then, moving over to Tunisia, which has been out of the headlines most of the time. During this period, did we have any issues, interests, concerns about that country?

JACKSON: Definitely. Tunisia is a small, moderate country in a “rough neighborhood,” as they love to tell you, sandwiched between bigger neighbors. Tunisia is a middle-class, export-oriented, commercially adept success story. On the other hand, it's a small country and a small market. They have been unable to capture the kind of investment that they have aspired to. It's also the case that the Ben Ali government has generated increasing concern here and has been far less tolerant of human rights than the country's stable internal situation would seem to warrant. So there were frequently congressional inquiries and complaints sponsored by groups like Middle East Watch, Amnesty International, or the Lawyers' Committee about high profile, individual cases of imprisonment without cause and various forms of harassment in Tunisia.

Q: Libya?

JACKSON: Well, Libya was a paradox in that it occupied a large amount of our time for a country where we had no embassy or legal American presence. Of course, there were Americans involved in the oil business in Libya, perhaps a couple hundred, who were there illegally. We were represented by the Belgian Embassy Interests Section, but the bulk of our Libyan work was related to the United Nations and the regular six-month renewal of the sanctions regime against Libya, dealing with violations of these controls, reviewing flight requests to make sure that they were medical or humanitarian and, of course, the tragedy, still unsolved years later, of Lockerbie. There were regular meetings with survivor families who, understandably, have been through an emotional hell and were divided among themselves how best to proceed - whether to hang tough or to accept a Hague court remedy, whether or not to accept compensation. I attended one very difficult

meeting with a large number of families, at which Secretary Albright, new in her job, spoke to them and handled it with great sensitivity, I thought.More generally, I found myself back in the mainstream of the Department the first time since the late 60s and early 70s, and there were certainly some differences that struck me in the way the place worked. I was working on substantially the same countries, so perhaps have a basis for comparison. Because of the press of business there was, in contrast to the earlier period, a lack of collegiality. Maybe that particularly struck me coming from FSI, where the deans, at the time I was here, had a collective strength. We were looked to as a group to meet, discuss, formulate positions, and exercise influence. Very difficult, it seemed to me, to get country directors in the Department to accept that kind of collective responsibility. They were, by and large, good individuals, but the press of business and the competition among them for the few embassies still awarded to the career service seemed divisive to me. There was clearly also far greater politicization than I had been aware of in the early years. Schedule C and other political appointments were embedded throughout the Department at depths where they would never previously have been found. This created a very uneven playing field where you had people with invisible assets and strengths outside the Department operating at different levels within it; people with very close ties in Congress or to think tanks throughout Washington which would come into high relief on issues related to the Arab-Israeli conflict, which dominated the NEA Bureau, of course.

Among deputy assistant secretaries, it was a very unequal game as well, where you would usually have a political DAS with enormously close ties to the Hill. If they were dynamic individuals, they could and did ride roughshod over their career counterparts. I don't mean by that that the Department didn't benefit from their experience and outside contacts. It clearly did. The situation, nevertheless, created a shaky work environment, and mixed signals to the troops below.

In the case of Egypt, for example, a large part of our office's portfolio, was divided, as far as sixth floor responsibility, among two DAS', a political one for the Gore-Mubarak partnership and economic issues, and a career one for political and other aspects

of the relationship. There wasn't good communication between them, which led to misunderstandings and conflicting instructions. I was constantly trying to reassure the excellent mid-level officers in the office that this was just part of the game, but it should clearly not be.

On a larger scale, the same phenomenon pertained in the division between the Special Negotiator for the Middle East and the Assistant Secretary for NEA, Dennis Ross and Bob Pelletreau at that time. I can understand that the Special Negotiator has got to have a maximum of running room and a small staff to take advantage of fast-breaking events and secrecy to move the process forward. At that time, however, the peace process was mostly stalled by an intransigent Netanyahu government. If you were involved in, let's say, the bilateral relationship with Egypt, a major U.S. partner obviously without which there wouldn't be a Middle East peace process, you just weren't really credible with the Egyptian ambassador and their top people if you weren't aware of who was up and who was down in Middle East negotiations. I felt that we frequently weren't. I have to very much admire Bob Pelletreau for the way that he stoically soldiered on in that circumstance. There wasn't anything that was going to ruffle his professionalism, but I'm sure it wasn't easy. Nor did I like to see on “60 Minutes” the way that he was pilloried by Peter Jennings for CIA betrayal of the Kurds when CIA Director Deutsche and others really responsible got off scot-free.

Q: This time you're talking about, 1995-97, you're talking about pretty much the second half of the first Clinton Administration. It had gotten its feet wet by then. One of the questions one always asks of every administration, when you're dealing with the Middle East, is whether there is an excessive bias towards Israel or not? It seemed like the Bush Administration had been trying to be more even-handed and got its nose bloodied. How did you feel about the Clinton Administration?

JACKSON: As I said before, the way the thing was compartmentalized, Stu, I was not involved in the Middle East peace process, so it would be hard to make reliable judgments on it.

Q: There has to be an atmosphere.

JACKSON: I think there was a feeling that, at several critical moments, stronger pressure on Jerusalem to move forward was essential, that this was not forthcoming from the Clinton Administration, and that the peace process and the accomplishments of Oslo just lay there and were not carried forward. Frankly, however, we were so damn busy with day-to-day crises of North Africa and the press of business on Egypt that my impressions were at best peripheral vision.

The quality of mid-level officers I inherited and subsequently recruited was very high. Among them, Peter Vrooman on Algeria, Paul Malek on Egypt, Evan Reade on Tunisia, Diane Kelly on Political-Military Affairs, and several others will surely go far in the Service if performance and ability correlate to promotion and advancement. There was also a fine support team, among the best in the Department, which included Trish Weaver and Lavenia Holland, who regularly rebuffed recruiters from the White House, the field, and the 7th Floor because of their commitment to that office and North African Affairs.

Q: What about our relations with Egypt during this 1995-97 period?What were the main interests and concerns?

JACKSON: Well, to some extent, the relationship with Egypt is a function of the peace process and that's the reason for the frustration of not being more involved in it, because there was a marked ebb and flow with Egypt that followed the peace process. The Gore-Mubarak initiative, however, really did lock us into an ongoing dialogue on reform in Egypt. Egypt, as you know, is in a very critical race between population growth, on the one hand, and modernizing and opening up their economy - making it export oriented - on the other. An outward-looking, competitive economy is vital to create the jobs needed to absorb a still expanding population. When you fly over the Delta in Egypt, the overpopulation is striking in the running together into almost a single urban mass of what used to be isolated Delta farming villages in some of the richest soil on Earth. The

overlays of pharaonic bureaucracy and socialist infrastructure, nevertheless, ensure built-in resistance to reforms needed to modernize and to make Egypt more productive. The dialogue between a cautious, relatively slow-moving, but pragmatic, army officer, Hosni Mubarak, and Al Gore, was interesting to observe and, ultimately, affects the whole region because it is linked to the peace process and development of regional business so that investors in Egypt can be sure of exporting from there to Morocco or to Saudi Arabia. The difficulty in the equation is accommodating Israel and creating conditions under which Arab businessmen are willing to deal with Israelis and the kind of self- confidence among Egyptians that they don't feel, faced with Israel's greater business acumen and technology, that they're going to be eaten alive.

Q: I realize you weren't part of the peace process, but the fact that we had a very difficult government in Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu and the Likud, put an awful lot of things on hold, didn't it? There was very little Egyptian-Israeli dialogue or normal commerce at that time.

JACKSON: Things were moving along well before the assassination of Rabin. They had made remarkable progress. The enthusiasm of businessmen following the Casablanca Business Summit was encouraging, but that election was a set-back. I think there was a period of rebuilding with the Israelis, since we had been pushing so hard for Peres. So, there was a period of letting the government consolidate and find itself, but it soon became apparent what their core positions were and what the restrictions on Netanyahu's freedom of movement from the right were, and I think things have been drying up mostly ever since. Mubarak, Hassan, and a few others genuinely did seem to give the benefit of the doubt at first, but as the process went south, the job in offices like mine and for the countries I was dealing with, shifted from one of expanding the envelope with Israel to one of the most minute damage limitation. For example, if a country like Tunisia had finally established a liaison office in Tel Aviv, after months of U.S. urging and prodding, we then made it a focal point that they keep it open or did not pull out their charge or leave it uncovered during vacation periods, at that level of detail and tension to the extent that, I'm afraid, many of

those countries began to feel that their relationship with us was no more than a prism of the peace process and that we valued them, exclusively or in large part, as a function of their relationship with Israel. Unfortunately, they were correct in their perspective, and we often failed to take full account of the kind of broad, bicentennial relations that we had with a country like Morocco.

Q: We've sort of come to the end of this particular part. Did yohave some general comments you'd like to make?

JACKSON: Well, just to wrap it up. The period in NEA was extraordinarily interesting and after the so-called, normal hours of FSI, the pace of a busy, mainstream office was exhilarating. The two years went by as if they were two months. At the end of my time in NEA, I was put forward as Bureau candidate for one of the com posts, but in the event, the Deputies' Committee was delayed in meeting for months and months and then, as it developed, the new Secretary had her own candidate, a strong officer, who's since done well in the post. So, I padded out 10 or so subsequent lists and by that time the assistant secretaries I'd particularly worked with were long departed, and one becomes kind of damaged goods. So I did a series of short-term assignments like the Commerce Department Senior Promotion Boards, and a USIA speaking trip to Morocco. Over the past year, I have been very fortunate to be Executive Director at ADST and to work with you and others on the Oral History Program. Arguably, Oral History will leave a more lasting imprint than most of the day-to-day fires one puts out in the Department.

Being out of the system, so to speak, I've had some time to reflect over this last year and have come to view the Department as inward looking, self-important, and often irrelevant to the world outside. It seems to me that NGOs (Non-Government Organizations) are increasingly flowing into the vacuum, and despite the Department's claims to the contrary, many businessmen tell me that they are at pains to circumvent and avoid contact with U.S. embassies abroad. I'm also finding, in the transition to the private sector and the marketing effort to present foreign service skills as relevant to the outside world, that we are seen by

those outside to much less cutting edge than we ourselves think we are. I think, reflecting on my 30 plus years, that the Foreign Service is a unique career for the intellectual horizons that it opens and the privilege of a bird's eye view of other governments and cultures. But as George Kennan, I believe, once observed, it's not necessarily the right place for those with creative rather than careerist ambitions. Not that I would trade or take back the experiences that I had in Somalia, Greece, and Morocco that we talked about. Like many of my cohorts, however, I will be leaving far less committed to the profession in which I have spent most of my working life than when I entered.

This is probably true of most diplomatic services in which the praise and inflated annual ratings eventually end up rubbing off on the ratee. It's also natural, as the triangle narrows towards the top of the pyramid, that many will depart less than fully satisfied. That is as it should be and reflects a healthy competition in any large organization. What disturbs me and many departing senior officers, though, is the haphazard nature and politicization of our process. It seems to me that a succession of director generals, eager for their own next embassies, have been unwilling to stand their ground with the political level, resigning if necessary, and that as a result, there's been little sense of backbone in the career service and insufficient memory and continuity in personnel. One accepts with reluctance the stream of political ambassadors, but politicizing the career service is another matter. The Director General should be a Loy Henderson or a George Vest, on the verge of retiring, and with no residual self-interest. Absent that, the tendency to go along to get along is just too strong. The result is unfortunately that among political appointees on the 7th floor, influence is today measured by how many of one's staffers get the ambassadorial nod, with particular plums reserved for almost anyone from the NSC. This leads many observers to the conclusion that you don't need language skills or area expertise and, in the extreme, that we could rely on e-mail and faxes to be our eyes and ears abroad. I exaggerate here, of course, but there is a complacency in Foggy Bottom that we can ill afford as the world's remaining superpower, and there are surely crises ahead that, as things now stand, will almost certainly catch us flat-footed.

Finally, Stu, I'd like to say that the Foreign Service is first and foremost a career of families with both extraordinary rewards and privations. In my 30 plus years, family has made the difference in whatever success I have had and in enjoyment of the various posts. I have twice married, and the sacrifices of uprooting and moving about, easy to underestimate at the time, have clearly been the underpinning of the career that I have had. It was, for example, a particular treat to see Greece and Morocco through the interaction with those countries of my son and daughter and two step-daughters. Still, as I leave the Foreign Service, I do not see it as a career that I can, at least at this close distance, fully recommend to young people who ask me about it. The bottom line, I think, relative to the private sector, is that there often is no bottom line and one can too easily coast by without the kind of risk taking and commitment that are inevitable in some other professions.

The point was brought home to me on my last day of work in the U.S. government, after a retirement lunch, as I took a taxi from FSI to the airport. The driver was a young Somali with aquiline features, and I asked him in vestigial Somali whether “riding is holding with hands” and “whether spring and the fool can both bring gifts,” traditional proverbs meaning whatever one wants them to. The floodgates opened, and we spoke about Ali Shermarke, and Abderrazak Hagi Hussein, and Aden Abdullah Osman, leaders from Somalia's brief heyday before he was born, and of the hopes that nation once had. In his own family of teachers, none are still alive in that now ruined land, and he and two siblings only escaped via Kenya to find their way abroad. Riding into retirement, it seemed to me that I had come full circle. Somalia has gone from the impoverished, but proud and starkly beautiful new country that I knew to the grim landscape of a failed state; my own first-post idealism has turned with time to skepticism, and it is surely no longer possible to believe the course of history or U.S. influence on it is anything like one of unbroken progress. In short, there is a world that goes on out there, according to its own rhythms and beyond the reach of the morning meeting or the bureaucrat's in-box. There is, in fact, a yawning gap between the two. With the poetic vision of our century, we are able, through the astronauts' eyes, to look down on this small, emerald planet, whirling away and lost, as Dean Rusk used to

say, in the immensity of space. Yet it appears to me harder and harder to see ourselves clearly, as we are seen abroad. It is a truism to say that U.S. embassies are besieged without and in the grip of a siege mentality within or that Uncle Sam is today distrusted in much of the planet. Still, as I leave it, the future of the Foreign Service, or for that matter diplomacy as a profession, seems to me far from clear.

End of interview